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THE BATTLE FOR FRANCE

ADOLF HITLER must bitterly regret the prophecy hich his intuition led him to make in September 942, when he placed a limit of 9 hours on the bility of invading Allied forces to maintain hemselves on the coast of France. Events have urned out far otherwise. Softened by an over-helming naval and air bombardment, and reached by skilful air-borne landings, the coastal rust crumbled with a swiftness which clearly eranged the Germans' defensive plans. Instead f being pinned on the beaches, or at least onfined to restricted bridgeheads for long nough to enable mobile German reserves to rrive and deliver a well-placed counter-attack hile the assault forces still lacked supporting eapons, the Allies stormed quickly inland, hattering the German infantry divisions whose le was to absorb the first shock. Thus, within few days, General Montgomery secured ample lbow-room both to receive and deploy successive aves of reinforcements and to manoeuvre his riking force. The initiative which he has thus ained has not been lost. The enemy, forced to onform to the pattern of Allied thrusts, has had use all his readily available mobile divisions, ncluding at least four armoured divisions, in ndeavouring to patch tears in his defensive line. lready the most critical phase in an amphibious peration, to whose magnitude and design Marshal alin has paid generous tribute, may be said to ve been surmounted.

The battle of Normandy will doubtless increase scope and intensity. The Luftwaffe, used rsimoniously in the initial phase of the invasion, ust before long risk making an appearance and ield-Marshal Rommel has certainly not yet used s full resources for a counter offensive. Never-eless, the struggle on this one sector of the ench coast is reported already to have absorbed least 15 German divisions—probably over a arter of the total German forces in France, d a much higher proportion of those which n be concentrated in any single area considering at the German Command must always be epared to deal with other landings. We have ll to secure a serviceable port, and it may be me time before optimists who expect to see a umphal breakthrough to Paris and beyond will be satisfied. (Indeed, in some ways we should be glad if the issue of the war could be determined in Normandy, thus sparing France the destruction which must devastate whole departments if the Germans conduct a fighting withdrawal to the Rhine.) But, however the campaign goes, it has opened with a precision and efficiency which have triumphed over inclement weather and must already be occasioning Field-Marshal von Runstedt the depression which beset Ludendorff in the summer of 1918. A very similar depression—similar in its origin and its implications—seems to run through the recent defeatist broadcasts of General Dittmar—broadcasts censored in transmissions to the German people.

For the successful opening of the Allied invasion of Western Europe is not the end of the German army's troubles. In Italy, the swift Allied advance west of the Tiber is placing in jeopardy the whole of the 10th German Army, outflanked and retreating slowly along the difficult mountain roads of the Apennines. Kesselring has been compelled to draw upon almost every reserve division which he was credited with having at his disposal in Northern Italy. If General Alexander is to be debarred from forcing the northern Apennines between Florence and Pisa and debouching into the plains of Lombardy, it seems clear that German troops must be transferred to Italy from other theatres. To weaken the West would be to play into General Eisenhower's hands; yet dare the German Command deplete the Eastern Front? Already the Russians have begun their summer offensive with a shrewd blow against the Finnish lines on the Karelian Isthmus. This operation, one of whose purposes may well be to point for Rumania's benefit the lesson that refusal of reasonable peace terms does not pay Axis satellites, is undoubtedly but a foretaste of what is in store for Germany's Eastern Armies.

In short, the military picture which is presented to-day is one of a German Army and Air Force stretched almost to breaking point, with its supporting industrial potential severely damaged by Allied air attacks. (How else account for the high proportion of obsolete French tanks captured from one of the German armoured divisions in Normandy?) If the Allies do not delay too long in publishing the terms on which they must have decided ultimately to accept "unconditional" surrender, the leaders of the Wehrmacht may be induced more quickly than seemed possible before the opening of the Second Front to realise that capitulation offers the only way of escape from the total destruction of Germany.

With the wheels thus running with such encouraging momentum towards military victory, it is the more regrettable that the attitude of the United States towards General de Gaulle and the Provisional Government of France—should continue to be intractable. It is bad enough that the liberating Anglo-American Armies should be supplied with counterfeit French currency printed in the United States to the tune (it is said) of 80,000 million francs over whose issue the Provisional Government is to have no control, and whose ultimate redemption (for redeemed it must be) by London and Washington is left obscure. A much more serious feature of a situation which General de Gaulle has roundly described as "unacceptable" is that General Eisenhower is left free, and is indeed presumably enjoined, to set up in liberated France puppets of his own selection to administer local government under his authority and ultimately, one must conclude, to form a Government in rivalry to the Provisional Government established in Algiers. This threat has not been removed by the fact that General de Gaulle has been allowed to visit France.

Alone among the countries of Western Europe, France, whose Resistance Movement we have for years called on for help, is to be treated not as a liberated but as an occupied country. The Allies could find no surer way of creating universal xenophobia among Frenchmen of all shades of opinion and of fanning the flames of civil war in France. We have more than once had occasion to criticise both General de Gaulle and his entourage; but the composition of the eventual Government of France is a matter for the French people to decide. The essential point at the moment is that the whole Resistance Movement of renascent France is centred upon the *mystique* of General de Gaulle, whose Provisional Government is the one authority capable of saving France from chaos and famine when the Germans leave. We rely now very greatly on the French Maquis as a force capable of disrupting German communications and hastening the defeat of the enemy forces facing us in Normandy. What sort of resistance are we likely to get if we continue to listen to the pro-Vichy elements in Washington and — notoriously — in General Eisenhower's civil administration, and if our rallying cry to French patriots is " Rise ! You have nothing to lose but your hopes " ?

The New Greek Government

Mr. Papandreou's new Government is not as representative as the agreement reached at the Lebanon Conference seemed to promise. Most of its members are Liberals, men who have escaped from Greece in recent months and who know that their political future depends on their ability to convince their countrymen that the Government is representative. Almost inevitably they will want to bring in delegates from E.A.M. and Communists ; indeed up till the middle of last week, Mr. Papandreou seemed unable to persuade some of the new Ministers to accept portfolios unless E.A.M. representatives accepted at the same time. But when the news of the Normandy invasion reached Cairo—coinciding conveniently with an untrue report of Allied landings in Greece—the Liberals appear to have decided that the formation of a strong Government was an urgent necessity and entered the Cabinet. So far, the E.A.M. have not chosen the people whom they wish to represent them in the new Government ; but they have assured Mr. Papandreou of their support. The delay is, no doubt, due to their desire for some definite assurances from the Prime Minister, not only on the question of the constitution, but also on the much more immediate issue of an amnesty for the men arrested during the recent unrest in the Greek forces. If E.A.M. participated in the Government without such assurances, it would be placed in the invidious position of sanctioning the punishment of its own supporters by an authority in which it shared. There have been hints that Mr. Papandreou, under British pressure, is trying to withdraw from some of the promises made at the Lebanon meeting. He should realise that without E.A.M. support, the position of his Government, although composed of men who do not share the discredit which has fallen on previous Greek Cabinets, will still remain unstable.

Polish Propaganda in the U.S.A.

We have now had an opportunity of reading the charges made against the Polish Ministry of Information in the United States. Representative Celler, of New York, has followed up the publication of the accusations made by the Federal Bureau by demanding an investigation into the whole affair. The books of the Polish Information Centre, a branch of the Polish Ministry of Information (of which the Minister is Professor Kot) were recently examined by the Department of Justice, and it was discovered that the agency was paying American citizens and an American organisation (not listed as foreign agents as required by the law), and was spending far more money than had been reported to the United States Authorities. The origin of this money reveals much of Polish propaganda methods. When the late General Sikorski was in America, the United States Government granted funds for the purpose of financing the Underground Movement in Poland. Part of this money was not used according to the Agreement, but for Polish propaganda in the United States through the intermediary of the Polish information centre in New York, which, according to the Budget for 1944, had an allocation of 478,140 dollars, namely, an increase from 119,530 spent in 1943. But the Federal Bureau of Investigation discovered that the Centre had spent more money than the budget gave them. Part of this was distributed to American citizens of Polish extraction for Republican propaganda against Roosevelt. The " Lady Bountiful " was none other than Col. Matusiewski, whom Professor Kot describes as a " sworn enemy of the present Government," and whose activities, he says, are " a mystery " to him. An analysis of the Budget of Professor Kot's Ministry for 1944 reveals many interesting items. As the money comes from the loan made by the British Government, the British public should justly demand full details.

Planning Industrial Location

Mr. Hugh Dalton made the best of his case when he expounded to the House of Commons the Government's plans for influencing the location of industry after the war. But, as a number of critics have pointed out, though the declarations of general principle are excellent, the instruments proposed for giving effect to them seem singularly inadequate. The Distressed Areas were re-christened " Special Areas " in the 'thirties; now they are to be known as " Development Areas," and the measures used for helping them before 1939 are to be strengthened. So far, so good; but is a policy of help to distressed areas, whatever they may be called, really the right way of going about the problem of planning the location of industry? Industry needs planning, not only in large distressed regions, but in a great many other places besides—wherever there is a bad balance between, say, heavy and light industries, or when a distressed town is in the middle of a relatively prosperous area. The problem of planning ought to be approached as a national problem, not as one limited to a few areas. Yet the White Paper appears to envisage it in the latter way; and Mr. Dalton's speech hardly went beyond the White Paper. He did, however, lay considerable stress on the power which the Government would have over location for some time to come through the granting or withholding of building permits.

A Guaranteed Income

The American steel workers, an important group in the Congress of Industrial Organisations, faced with the " Little Steel " formula which refuses them any advance in wage-rates, have come forward with a demand for a guaranteed *yearly* wage. Their leaders argue that, if stabilisation is the essential basis of the Administration's economic policy, as applied by the tax laws to profits and to the farmers by the system of guaranteed prices, the worker has a right to demand that his standard of living, and not merely his rate of wages when he is actually employed, shall be guaranteed as a requital for his acceptance of the limitations on his bargaining power involved in the surrender of the right to strike. The steel workers are at present asking for this guarantee only for a period of two years, corresponding to the guarantees which have been given to other sections of the population; but evidently the demand might be renewed for a longer period. It is, in effect, a variant on the claim, familiar in this country since the 'eighties of the last century, for " the right to work "—the recognition of the worker's claim to be carried on the strength of the industry to which he is attached. Somewhat similar ideas have been mooted here among the building operatives, who have argued that, if they are to be asked to train a great mass of dilutees for service in post-war housing, they can reasonably claim a regular guaranteed wage, to be conceded in connection with an assured long-term building programme. The demand for social security is coming to include a demand for an assured status in industry for the workman.

Lord Passfield, O.M.

There are two letters which we should all be proud to put after our names. Whereas it is still true of some Honours that there is no damn merit about them, the O.M. is earned by merit and by merit alone. Among the three new O.M.s we note with peculiar pleasure the recognition of Sidney Webb's great services to his generation. Unhappily, Beatrice Webb is not here to share this honour with him ; from the *History of Trade Unionism* up to, and beyond, their *Soviet Communism*, their joint work represents a partnership of unique value. In their innumerable books which became the classic expositions of their subjects, they threw fresh light on the life and nature of established social institutions. They influenced one generation after another, and not least those who consciously revolted against their opinions. Among these was Mr. Churchill, who has evidently not forgotten that the Webbs taught him much about social questions—even if he has apparently forgotten much of what they taught. The O.M. stands to intellectual achievement as the V.C. does for military heroism, and there is no civilian hero whom we are so glad to see honoured as Sidney Webb. This journal has a special right to be pleased since the Webbs were the chief founders of the NEW STATESMAN.

PARLIAMENT : Impasse

Wednesday afternoon.

SYMPATHY with de Gaulle and Algiers is so widespread in the House that the Prime Minister's blunt and bullying refusal to talk about the French political situation at all excited something less than the usual obsequious roar of assent. Indeed, he had to stoop to that never-failing cheer-jerker, the lives and exploits of our fighting men—relevant really in just the opposite sense to that in which Mr. Churchill used it.

Boothby led the procession of supplementaries; he got no promise of immediate satisfaction. The Prime Minister doubtless found it convenient to admit that he had not yet read President Roosevelt's statement on the Allied currency issued in France, though he understood that it had been printed in the morning papers. Aneurin Bevan was long-winded, and inclined to fumble, giving the Prime Minister several obvious openings, which he did not hesitate to enter. The appeal for " a measure of leniency and forbearance " having not quite come off, the cane began to slide down the headmaster's sleeve, and it was intimated menacingly that if a debate were insisted on, and the Government criticised, " a case would have to be made "—which would only widen the existing breach. Members on all sides were deeply disturbed.

A powerful Right-wing bunch chose on Tuesday to celebrate the first week of the Second Front by staging a grand show-down on the sacred, inalienable, fundamental right of the Englishman to poison children with dirty milk. The debate ranged for some 8 hours, the occasion being the Committee stage of the Food and Drugs (Milk and Dairies) Bill, commonly called the Clean Milk Bill. The extreme Tory backbenchers had turned up in force, and in their most truculent and pernickety mood ; the Labour benches were comparatively empty. The complaint was that the dairy farmer would be " at the mercy of the Ministry," without right of appeal. The usual tags—" dictatorship " and even " Fascism "—were brandished by these high-powered democrats. Alec Walkden, in his woolly, genial way, made quite a good point with: " Is not every tenant farmer in this country at the mercy of the landowner ? " Sir Edward Grigg, usually an equable old gentleman, fumed and snarled with the worst of them. He had frequented debates in Parliament for over forty years, he said, and he had " never been so horrified " in his life as by the proposal (for the registration of milk producers !) ; he went back to Runnymede in the course of a long and passionate variation on the theme already stated by Erskine-Hill—that " the surrender of the liberty of the individual is too great a price to pay even for clean milk." McGovern of the I.L.P. once more earned the cheers of the Tories with the curious argument :—

> We have a form of society to-day which may not square with my ideas, but . . . it is the accepted legal system of to-day, and under that system we have to give the greatest measure of protection to the individual, whether as private individual or business concern.

Hudson was patient and conciliatory. He put the matter in proportion with his opening sentence: "This Bill is designed to try to improve the milk supply of this country." He announced a substantial concession—an appeal tribunal consisting of the regional superintending veterinary officer and nominees of the Milk Marketing Board and the Farmers' Union. Having conceded, as Tinker said, "99 points out of the 100," he conceded the hundredth by undertaking to be bound by unanimous decisions of these tribunals.

Despite Hudson's accommodating attitude, 76 Members, mostly Tory, voted against the Churchill Government in this momentous week of the war; it is, of course, only Labour men who are guilty of breaches of national unity when they take such action. What with E.P.T. and 18B, this whole week is an anti-Government campaign by the Tories.

Asked, non-orally, what percentage of strengths of units serving with the Home Forces had received the form which enables them to register as voters, Sir James Grigg gave the mysterious reply, "Slightly more than 100 per cent."

PONTIFEX MINOR

RISORGIMENTO

For the first time it sounds sense to talk about Italy as a co-belligerent. Those who form the new Government in Rome have been allies throughout. They have been fighting Fascism for more than twenty years. The Foreign Office would not believe in the strength of the underground movement until in Rome itself they found a National Liberation Committee, alive, existing somehow in great danger, with an underground Military Commander of the city standing by and a Premier-elect, able to take over the Government.

It is probably true that the Bonomi Cabinet will not, as it stands, prove more than temporarily adequate to the needs of liberated Italy. But at this stage it has the supreme merit of consisting of men of proved courage and integrity, chosen by the people and representing all the main anti-Fascist groups. Apart from Sforza, who stands for an old, self-respecting tradition that could not stomach Mussolini, and Croce, who, with two Liberal professors in the Government, represents the intellectual tradition that would not bow the knee to Fascist ideology, here are two members of Don Sturzo's Popular Party, several Socialists, including Guiseppe Saragat, one of the most able leaders of the underround movement, and Togliatti, the Italian Communist leader, who is more famous under his pseudonym of Ercoli. The Prime Minister himelf is a respected, progressive politician, seventyne years old, an anti-Fascist, but never arrested, erhaps because he had been honoured with the itle of "cousin" of the King. The dangers these en have lived through have just been once again lustrated when the body of Buozzi, the chairan of the underground trade unions, was cently found outside Rome. He had been murered, with thirteen of his colleagues.

The anti-Fascist movement within and without aly is necessarily republican. The House of avoy surrendered the constitutional liberties of aly to Mussolini and had obeyed him ever since. nevitably, Bonomi insisted on abolishing the oath allegiance to the royal house. That any governent formed from the Italian freedom movement ould take this stand has been clear ever since e first documents about the great strikes in ilan and Turin in March 1943 reached ngland. Indeed, the only reason why the public tside Italy has been uncertain on this point is at the full and informative accounts of the ti-Fascist organisation in Italy were suppressed ainly, it seems, because neither the Prime inister nor the Foreign Office likes Republics. r. Churchill has said as much. The Italians ow this; our broadcasting service to Italy has ent four years doing Royal service to the House Savoy. When the Duke of Aosta died a isoner in our hands, he received from the B.B.C. funeral oration worthy of the Pope. When e underground newspaper published by the ilan and Turin strikers in March 1943 outlined programme for a free Italy the B.B.C. rebroadt the programme with the great strike news Italy, but actually omitted the first item of this ogramme, which was the creation of an Italian public. Perhaps it is also because of its Repuban trend that, so far, the B.B.C. has uttered no rd of welcome to the first free Government of erated Rome.

As Regent the Crown Prince is not a satisfactory figurehead. The interview he recently gave to the Naples correspondent of two great English newspapers was presented as a revelation of his fundamental niceness. But if we had been more aware of the true nature of Fascism in Italy we should have noticed the deep offence this interview gave to freedom-loving Italians. Benedetto Croce's fierce protest was scarcely reported here. The Crown Prince had simply said, when asked whether the King of Italy couldn't have done something to prevent Italy entering the war on Germany's side, that public opinion in Italy showed no evidence of objecting to the war. *There had not even been a demand for Parliament to be summoned.* To anti-Fascist Italians with a record of twenty years in and out of prison for protesting against Mussolini and his wars it was beyond a joke to suggest that the Fascist Corporative chamber of servile nominees was akin to a free Parliament.

Last week one agency report from Rome said that a shot had been fired near the Crown Prince in Rome. Another agency report described the Monarchist Party after the formation of the Bonomi Government as "shadowy." It is not our business to impose a Monarchy, a Regency or a Republic on Italy, but it is at our peril that we avoid noticing the trend of affairs in liberated Europe, or even dismiss Italy, as we did for so many years, as a beautiful but unimportant country. We see within Italy to-day developing a popular movement which will be very conscious of the similar movement amongst the Greeks and Yugoslavs and which will in its turn influence the Resistance movements throughout the Balkans. That is no doubt one of the reasons for the official support here of the Monarchy in Italy. Apart from a few mystics who still believe in the divine right of kings (and they exist, especially among Catholics and High Churchmen), there is a feeling that political passion runs so high in these southern European countries that a Monarchy is a stable and balancing factor. To this the modern European replies that nowadays political divisions, whose roots lie deep in social structure, cannot be cured from the top by the superimposition of a king.

This nineteenth-century view is now increasingly discarded by those who have to deal with the facts of Europe. Some day we shall know more of the tragic delay during the period of Mussolini's fall. We know from Mr. Churchill's own admission that serious mistakes were made; some day, when the Armistice terms are published and the facts about the revolt in Northern Italy are published, we shall be better able to judge of those events. In any case, General Alexander is no longer troubled by fear that the Italian fleet will be used against us if he links up with the popular forces, and he has already and frequently recognised the aid of "Patriots" in Northern Italy. Instructions have long been going out to the partisan forces from Allied Headquarters, and during the last two months Alexander has recognised, in glowing terms, the success of their resistance. Every day he refers to the number of German motor vehicles destroyed, Germans killed, and sabotage effected. On June 12th, the communique spoke of "heavy fighting" by Italian partisans, and on June 10th, Alexander again thanked factory workers in Turin and Milan for their "direct assistance to the Allied advance." It is strange that this important military and political factor has been so little reported to the British public.

Italians are "working their passage home." They have their own free Government, genuinely co-belligerent, in Rome. In time the liberated forces in the Capital will join with the anti-Fascist movement with its headquarters in Milan and Turin and its sturdy guerrillas from the mountains. Then no doubt there will be further changes in the Government of Italy. New and younger men, with experience of active service in the factories and on the battlefield will be linked with stalwarts in Rome who have kept faith with democracy during those long years when Fascism could not be openly opposed. It is a prospect which the people of Britain should welcome. We should be profoundly grateful that we are at last able to help the Italians to regain their freedom, and we have the chance, if we will take it, to win and retain the same gratitude in the new Italy that we won in the last century by wisdom of statesmen who welcomed an earlier Risorgimento.

THE PENALTY OF RAPE

Our conclusion after considering more than one court-martial for rape in the American Army in this country is that the primary mistake is in maintaining the death penalty for the rape of an adult woman. It is seldom that the evidence can be conclusive; almost always the issue turns on the word of one woman against the word of one man. We are always sorry for those who have to try these cases, and for those who have the final responsibility of deciding whether the sentence of death should be carried out when a verdict of guilty has been found. In its full and indubitable sense it is not an easy crime to commit. It is only clearly committed in cases where the woman is made insensible by drugs or a blow or forcibly held down by more than one person. This occurs in the sack of cities, and it does occasionally happen through drink or imbecile savagery. No doubt there may also be cases where a threat of death may be held to be sufficiently real to turn "indecent assault" into rape. But in the case of an able-bodied woman the courts in this country through long experience have learnt to take a sceptical attitude towards allegations of rape, knowing that there is usually no small element of doubt as to the degree of force used or fear engendered or resistance offered. That virtual certainty which is always considered necessary for a conviction for murder is in the vast majority of cases quite unattainable in a trial for rape. Of all crimes rape is the least susceptible of proof.

Where the issue concerns a black man and a white woman there is exceptional reason for caution. The British public, ignorant of conditions in the Southern States of the U.S.A., has been learning with some surprise of the deep irrationality of the white attitude to the blacks. There are many reasons for this unhappy relationship: there is the hang-over of guilt from the days of slavery; there is a potent economic factor; there is also a deep sexual jealousy. Englishmen learn with some surprise that soldiers from the South, whom they may otherwise find pleasant and humane, are inclined to defend even the cruellest lynching of Negroes on the ground that "they are all right if they are kept in their place," and can only be kept in their place by occasional acts of terrorism. The British find this attitude all the more strange, since the black troops have, generally speaking, behaved with excellent discipline and made themselves extremely popular in this country.

The simultaneous presence of a large black force in company with American white soldiers in England was necessarily a cause of grave anxiety from the first. On the whole the relations of black and white here have been better than was feared six or twelve months ago. There have, of course, been incidents, fights and a few deaths. This has been no fault of the American authorities. Mr. Winant, General Eisenhower and General Lee have all spoken most clearly and decisively. It has been made a matter of army discipline for white troops to behave well to the Negroes who are fighting the same war as themselves and running the same risks. Local conditions have varied with the wisdom or folly of American Commanding Officers. Some confusion has resulted among the British from the contradictory regulations issued by the Home Office and War Office. According to the Home Office every effort should be made to treat Negroes as equals. The War Office regulation, on the other hand, has laid down that British soldiers must be polite to coloured troops, but not fraternise with them, or offer them drinks. In some parts of this country one may meet black and white troops on terms of equality in the same public houses. More often they are in practice segregated during their recreation hours. The picture by and large over this country is not unhappy, and cases in which American treatment of the Negroes has produced outspoken anger among the British are exceptional. Unfortunately, the improvement as far as the Americans are concerned appears to be superficial. Only too often we hear that American white soldiers from the South obey instructions on this matter as a necessary part of discipline without for a moment agreeing that serving in the same war and on the same battlefields entitles the Negro to an equal status. On the contrary, they often declare that the good treatment of the coloured troops here will make them "fresh" and out of hand in the United States when they get home. A bad period of racial trouble in America took place after the last war when the Negro had earned an improved economic and social status; the evidence suggests that the same causes will breed the same disease in an intensified form when the American army returns home after this war.

Englishmen are frankly shocked and disgusted by this attitude on the part of some sections of American soldiers. Learning of the position of the Negro in the Jim Crow States of the United States, the British public take for granted that a coloured soldier has in this country, as in Georgia or Mississippi, a poor chance of impartial justice when sexual crime is alleged. If a black man is accused of rape, the public will too easily assume that he has been "framed," and even when they are assured that the trial is fair and that no "third degree" has been attempted, they believe that he is likely to be hanged on evidence that would never be regarded as adequate in the case of a white soldier. That this is the reaction of the British public has been again clearly shown in recent cases which have received wide publicity in the press.

Rape in this country is not a capital offence, and most Englishmen—in company with an increasing number of Americans—are highly dubious whether it ought to be in any country. Because of the extreme difficulty of establishing the facts and of obtaining any satisfactory degree of proof, rape, above all other crimes, illustrates one of the gravest objections to the death penalty—that it is irrevocable. Once carried out, no new evidence of circumstances or character can avail. We believe that the great majority of the British public read of such cases with doubt, and regard them as acts of injustice. We are aware that in this matter the law is the same for white and black soldiers, and that the U.S. Army makes every effort to obtain a fair trial, whether the accused is white or coloured. Further, we believe that, if the facts were published, they would not bear out the assumption that in this country blacks are executed and whites reprieved. But we also know that attention is necessarily fastened on examples where the colour factor is introduced, and that the attitudes of many Americans to such trials seems to support the Englishman's suspicions. Rightly or wrongly, the British public doubts, in such cases, whether justice is done, and believes that colour has played a part in the decision. The conclusion is extremely damaging to Anglo-American relations, and cuts deep into that respect that all Englishmen want to feel for the institutions and way of life of their American comrades.

THE FUTURE OF THE LOW COUNTRIES

Four years of Nazi occupation stand between the emigré Governments of the Low Countries and their subjects at home. That is the central fact about the politics of their liberation. It is one that we should continually remember as the soldiers and statesmen who have found refuge in London prepare to return. In that time, politics have not stood still; and though both Governments have been more fortunate than those of Greece or Yugoslavia in concealing their private skeletons from the public gaze, the same problems that have so much embarassed King Peter and King George exist in a different form for Queen Wilhelmina and the Government of Belgium. For the last few months the clandestine press across the Channel and official publications in Britain have been discussing plans for the administration of their territories on the morrow of liberation. In the underground papers there has also been sharp criticism of those circles which, inside Holland and Belgium, and in emigration, are hoping that they will be able to set up governments which could by-pass or control the revolutionary enthusiasm of the resistance movements and establish autocratic reactionary regimes.

In February of this year, an article appeared in this journal which charged influential groups in the Dutch emigration with the intention to use the state of emergency which would be declared during the battle for liberation as a cloak under which to introduce repressive measures inspired by fear of "Communism," but in fact directed at Dutch democracy as a whole. At the end of May, *Vrij Nederland*, the London weekly sponsored by the Dutch Government, published an article called *What Tito can Teach Us*, which seems to confirm the fears expressed by the illegal press. The author, described as a man who had recently escaped from Holland, belongs, we gather, to a circle of Dutch industrialists and bankers which for some time past has been busy working for a new Holland which would not be exactly unfavourable to bankers and industrialists. Correctly, he sees that the conditions which produced Marshal Tito and the National Liberation Movement are not peculiar to Yugoslavia:

> These trends which are shaking the world and which already have thrust Yugoslavia into an open conflict between partisans and Government, are in principle existing in our own ranks.

But there is a tendency on the part of those in emigration to delay decisions by referring to "what they think" public opinion in Holland desires. It is easy to "over-estimate" the importance of the clandestine press. Yet the future of the Dutch nation depends upon decisions which must be taken immediately, about the war in the Far East and about internal political developments. The Dutch people will be in no condition to make up its mind in conditions of chaos, misery and famine.

> What we need is a straight course. We will not find that in Holland for the time being.

The writer wants the Dutch Government to take the wind out of the sails of the potential Titos:

> For Tito is not a special phenomenon of far-away Balkan States He is a symbol for this period as Quisling was for his. The quislings are doomed to disappear. It is probable that one day the Titos will also disappear. But only after their appearance, whatever good may have come from it, will have caused much misery and fierce struggle.

What, then, is to be done? The emigration must go ahead without hanging about waiting to consul the Dutch people. Its aim

> should be to secure for the Netherlands an honourable place in the world to come instead of waiting until other people send us orders. It may be necessary to go beyond the limits of constitutional norms . . .

This article roused indignation and alarm in Dutch democratic circles. It is interesting to note the reply that it evoked. Mr. A. den Doolard, a journalist who was formerly on the staff of a Social-Democratic paper in Holland, wrote a letter defending Tito against what he called the *Oranje-fascistische* theories of the original article. The danger in Holland, he says, is precisely from this kind of Fascism supported by the adherents of the House of Orange. There is only one group which must have the wind taken out of its sails; that is

> not the potential Dutch Titos but Dutch personalities who in their fascist attitude are like Mihailovich; and that cannot be achieved by a "firm line" being taken from London because for "the time being" it cannot originate in Holland, but by sticking to the existing line. It is not the anti-fascist democrats but the political parvenus, clumsy and half-baked as far as politics are concerned, who threaten to raise conflicts after liberation by knotting "firm lines" from abroad . . . these men are dangerous, who from sickly fear of Titos (read: for fear of "communists") try to break the anchor of our people's freedom, the constitution . . ., upon which the Dutch nation is built.

We have quoted this controversy at some length because we believe that it summarises a problem which is likely to grow in intensity during the coming months. If it were confined to Holland it would be serious enough. But in Belgium and in France, reactionaries and *attentistes* are preparing to change horses. They will try t ensure that liberation will mean a return t domestic instead of foreign authoritarianism In that direction lies civil war. Take as a furthe example the activities of such circles in Belgium The hot dispute that raged around the perso and the conduct of King Leopold subsided lon ago. But there has recently sprung up on th extreme Right, a peculiarly reckless plan for settin up a royal dictatorship after Belgium has bee freed. The underground Labour paper, *D Werker*, has been exposing this plot. It has bee advanced by highly placed gentlemen of th King's household and by the notorious Fasci Flemish priest, Father Callewaert, who calls fo "an extremely authoritarian government" an "the suppression of all party politics." Sever of the leaders of the avowedly Fascist Flemis National Union are said to be behind the ide *De Werker* is probably right in suggesting that suc an experiment would be short-lived. Before th war, Belgium was a crowned republic. After i the democratic movement, tested in the fire resistance, will be more vigorous than eve The King, and those who would promote suc folly in his name, should note the warning of th Socialist paper that "Fascism devours the kin who serve it." For the majority of Belgians, th war would begin all over again if there is an attem to set up any sort of a dictatorship.

There is clearly in the minds of those who ha borne the brunt of the struggle against the Na a grim determination to decide their own futu which finds no echo amongst some sections their nominal leaders. That determination a warning both to the exiled Governments and the Allies who, one day soon, will go to liber the people of the Low Countries. We have lea our lesson slowly but painfully in Italy; we ha not yet learnt it in France. Shall we have discover a new technique of liberation in eve country where our armies should march as soldi of freedom? That is the prospect unless we prepared to put our trust in the common peop and not in those who for years have be divorced from their struggle and who have real insight into the mood of those who fight fo new Europe.

A LONDON DIARY

At Dunkirk we heard a lot about the Providen- ial Weather. A miraculously calm sea made poss- ble the rescue of the British Army. This week, he Allied forces have done wonderfully well in pite of abominable weather. First a day's postponement and, since the invasion, high winds hat prevented supplies being landed for twenty-four hours, and low ceilings that handicapped he British and American Air Forces. Now I vish some of those people who were so sure hat God performed a miracle on our behalf in 1940 vould tell us why we have been so badly treated n 1944. Have we sinned and God turned gainst us? That would have been the explana- ion in earlier days. Or has the Devil been in harge this time? The theology of the clergy vho talk on these matters is an old curiosity of nine. I recall the preacher in the Crimean war vho said that "God has been sitting on the ence," and prayed Him to come down on our ide. Not many years ago a famous divine eclared with all solemnity that a hen which ad been laying one egg a day began to lay two hen the eggs were dedicated to a missionary ociety, and in the last war the theory was put orward that the bad weather was God's eply to Sunday gardening. What is the orthodox iew now? Have we all been producing so much n our Sunday allotments that the wind changed hen our armada set sail? Or what? Perhaps e theologians will explain.

* * *

Letters from the Middle East, confirmed by lks with men not long since in Cairo, are com- letely convincing about the range and intensity f the political consciousness of the British Army verseas. Take the story of the Cairo Parliament. have seen the programme of the recreations and oncerts available for the Forces in a large ecreational hall. It was here that a group first ecided to hold discussions on current affairs, d found themselves quickly swamped with thusiastic supporters. Though a charge of dmission was made—and serving men are not ry flush with piastres—the sessions were cked every night. The discussions did not al with the war. No attacks were, I'm told, ade on the Government; the Parliament lived an imaginary world of peace and victory. They scussed such questions as housing and full nployment. At the first meeting a "Labour overnment" was elected with a substantial ajority over the Common Wealth, Liberal and onservative Parties. Responsible "Ministers," ith real knowledge of home politics, were elected. efore long two satellite mock parliaments o flourished at two neighbouring R.A.F. units.

* * *

Instead of being pleased, as they should have en, the authorities became alarmed and the A.F. press and the local English papers ceased to ention the parliament. When the French press ok pictures of a session they were not allowed publish them. Then Goebbels referred to the rliament as an example of disaffection in the lied Forces! The military authorities at once zed on the excuse. The word parliament was t allowed to be used; the procedure was to low "the lines of the Oxford Union." The sembly was to be removed into barracks; bjects for discussion were to be vetted by the ea Education Officer, an attempt made to pose limits on the expression of political feeling, d the attention of all ranks was drawn to K.R. , which, strictly interpreted, would prevent any viceman from putting the case of a political ty. The Labour Prime Minister moved a e of protest, which was supported by the ders of all the other parties, including the nservatives, and was carried by a vote of 600 to 1. e military police stepped in and ordered the ss to withdraw. The parliament was effectively ed. An attempt to revive it in the restricted nosphere of the barracks produced an audience two. Sir James Grigg announced, as a great concession, that no disciplinary action was to be taken against individuals taking part in the protest.

* * *

I cannot doubt that when the full facts are known, progressive M.P.s of various parties will take this matter up. Democracy has never had so good an opportunity. Everybody complains that our democracy is not educated in political issues. Everybody knows that the soldiers have been told that they will have the right to vote. Yet the proxy voting forms are not to be seen among our Forces in the Middle East. The great opportunity for giving to the rank and file of soldiers the same kind of political knowledge that is assumed in the officer class is taken away from them. Not only is it necessary for these men to have their voting papers, but informed speakers, including M.P.s of all parties, should be given the opportunity to go to the Middle East and talk to the troops about post-war issues. It is suicidal to miss such an opportunity. Nothing can prevent the Army from being politically conscious after the war, and the future of England is largely dependent on whether its discontents, doubts and aspirations are reasonably and constitutionally expressed or left to be chewed over in private and ill-informed discussions. The result in the second case will be general disgruntlement with democracy as a whole. This need not happen. If the vote is used and men understand what they are voting about, democracy will have another chance.

* * *

I learn that Joad has received a number of letters commenting on his Brains Trust article. Most of them were in hearty agreement with his criticism on the B.B.C. as unduly "genteel." (I was glad to notice that Mr. Brendan Bracken showed in his speech at the B.B.C. lunch to Sir Henry Wood that he had taken the precaution of reading Joad's article, and duly dotted its i's and crossed its t's.) Some people, however, have suggested that Joad was exaggerating when he talked about a virtual ban on political questions on the Brains Trust. The B.B.C. itself points out that in recent sessions questions have been asked dealing with the party system, the minimum wage, trade depression, the school leaving age, post-war development, unemployment and the electoral system. This is true, but it does not so much dispose of Joad's point as suggest that it was imperfectly stated. Serve on a Brains Trust to any one of the Forces or even on one of the various civilian Brains Trusts which are now being organised throughout the country, and as likely as not you will be asked directly, whether it would be a good thing for our economic system to move towards a Soviet form, whether the Controls should be maintained after the war, and other similar and even more controversial questions. I agree that it is far easier to discuss such points frankly before a comparatively small seen audience than before millions of invisible listeners—but that only strengthens Joad's point. The speakers on the B.B.C. Brains Trust will be more restrained than at any ordinary meeting, even if they do get serious controversial questions that get near the political knuckle. This tang of reality is missing when the B.B.C. asks you whether the school leaving age should be raised, or whether the party system is a good one.

* * *

There are now 80,000 Italian prisoners of war in Great Britain, many of them as "co-belligerent prisoners," wearing new chocolate coloured uniforms. These men no longer live behind barbed wire or under guards, but have been formed into Pioneer companies with a British officer attached to each company. In every other respect their position is difficult. They may not go more than 2½ miles away from their camps. They have no current money, only chits on Naafi canteens, and they may not use any public conveyance or go into a bar or place of entertainment. If the latter conditions are to be relaxed they must have money; otherwise they could only go to have a glass of beer or visit a cinema with English friends who paid. The semi-freedom which has been so carefully devised for them works exactly like a colour bar. They feel like pariahs in the villages though they are usually well liked by the local inhabitants. I hope it will be possible before long to send these men home. In the meantime sensible treatment now would turn them into good ambassadors for Britain, and some message from the new Italian Government explaining their position and assuring them that they are not forgotten, would be a help.

* * *

The public knows Harry Roberts as a doctor who has built up a famous East End practice and clinic (bombed out in the blitz), and who for many years has written in a number of journals (at his best, of course, in this one) on a large variety of topics to do with health and disease, mental and physical, with old age, with social life in Stepney, with criminals, and the right not to be born. But those who know Harry Roberts away from his practice and his journalism think of him perhaps first of all as the gardener who has been writing an article, say, on "suicide" into the small hours, and who calls you with a cup of tea at 8.0, made over a wood fire, after having already done two hours' solid digging before breakfast. His Hampshire garden is a sort of miracle, the flower and vegetable garden and the orchard and the rest all constructed on the side of a chalk down. In his new book, *English Gardens* (one of the "Britain in Pictures" series), he refers, rather apologetically, to the gardens he has made, about one of which he wrote his first book, *Chronicles of a Cornish Garden*. *English Gardens* (Collins, 4*s*. 6*d*.), is produced with enchanting pictures. It sketches some of the past story of English gardening, with quotations from great gardening books, and states the author's faith in the unsophisticated cottage garden which is now the most popular hobby in England.

* * *

It seems that in Wales at least it is not true that the present generation is ignorant of the Bible. A friend who went over Pen-y Pass at the foot of Snowdon the other day saw, chalked on a wall, "Stop the war! See St. John——" Somebody else had written underneath by way of contradiction: "No! See . . .", and another Biblical reference followed. It is fascinating to speculate which quotations these Biblical students thought were so conclusive on this difficult problem.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Mrs. R. J. P. Hewison.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

An energetic London business man, English, just invalided from Services, used to big business, going France soon to live, returning London every month, desires SOLE AGENCY in France for first-class British product in universal demand, no luxury article, something which can go into almost immediate production. If you have good line I will sell it.—Advt. in *Times*.

Mr. G. L. Reakes, M.P. for Wallasey, who said he had "great leanings to Empire Free Trade," added that when exports got flowing again he hoped to see our Empire and Colonies at the head of the queue, with our Allies and friends immediately behind them, and the cowardly neutrals and our enemies standing at the end—"starving to death if necessary."—*Liverpool Daily Post*.

Circuses have other rationing problems. One "Fat Lady of the Circus" was stated to have lost stones on the ordinary ration and was granted an emergency ration because she was in danger of losing her livelihood.—*Evening Standard*.

Alleged to have killed and eaten a sheep he caught in his garden, George——received two months' imprisonment . . . . The offence was revealed through a policeman noticing a lamb crying outside ——'s house.—*News Chronicle*.

THE PLYMOUTH PLAN

[This article is by one of the architects who assisted in the preparation of the plan.]

To prepare a reconstruction plan or programme for a big city presents many complex problems to be solved and diverse interests to be satisfied. Probably every old city in the world has had difficulty in adjusting itself to changing conditions, particularly those resulting from the advances of science and of the automobile in the last fifty years : so that when large areas like the " blitzed " areas of Plymouth present unprecedented opportunities of remodelling to suit post-war conditions, the changes envisaged are bound to be big and comprehensive. The danger of presenting a design that is akin in character to other modern cities is paramount in large scale planning for a new city. To modernise ruthlessly an old town is just as bad town planning as it is to " Westernise " completely in the East. It is clear that the planner should respond to the influence of sentiment and tradition, and through the medium of the plan seek a new reconciliation between them and contemporary town planning.

The task undertaken was a considerable one, for it was soon realised that Plymouth suffered from the same troubles that affected all our cities —that of overcrowding in the central areas, traffic congestion, uneconomical " scatter " in its development without consideration for agriculture or thought for community planning, outdated property and so on. A grim picture perhaps, but nevertheless true, and though the people had rather grown used to their environment they were trying to make do under very unsatisfactory conditions.

In spite of the bombing, it was found that the bombed areas, together with " blighted " property still left large islands of undamaged areas, obstacles in form of main roads and railways to be considered. These areas were, to a large extent, absorbed into the new scheme so that they could be left undisturbed until they, in turn, become ripe for re-development. It was not in the best interests of the whole scheme to leave all undisturbed, and some individual buildings like the " Prudential " in the City Centre Plan were, therefore, recommended for removal in the early stages of reconstruction.

It was not considered desirable to destroy the character of Elizabethan Plymouth, even though there is room for much renovation and reconstruction work ; instead the report recommends it to be retained for posterity as an historic precinct, together with all its " period " buildings, while recreating on the line of its ancient foundations a new town wall built in harmony with those of the Royal Citadel.

The coastal panorama of Plymouth is probably one of the finest in the world, and its inland scenery of great beauty attracts many visitors. The problem here was to take advantage of the many different aspects that the hilly nature of its topography presents, and to find an alternative to the confused maze of streets that baffled the visitor. The opportunities that bombing has presented in rediscovering the many vantage points for viewing this coastal panorama of the Sound should not be missed. At the same time Renaissance vista planning would have produced a too formal and stereotyped setting for the buildings.

The promenade boulevard from North Road railway station to the Hoe, however, was both necessary and desirable if the visitor was fully to appreciate the magnificence of this panorama and to be able to find his way about the city. It provides a proper setting for a processional way for the many ceremonial activities and festivities that characterised Plymouth in the days of peace. Processions may take place without disturbing the easy flow of traffic while business life can continue unhindered. Spooner's " corner," it is claimed, presented the worst traffic congestion in the West of England, so that there was a strong case for ensuring a free flow on the ring roads.

The minimum standard of open space requirements of 4 acres per 1,000 persons for good healthy living conditions is large in comparison with existing provisions, and it is well known that central areas of towns are seriously deficient in this respect, for example, Drake Ward has only .02 acre per 1,000 persons of open space.

The political and social structure of the city, as in other towns, is still based on the traditional ward without any visible definition except that to be found on the city engineer's map. It is suggested that a green belt around each group could give that definition and provide additional open spaces that are at present insufficient. Often existing communities are severed by some arterial road or railway so that a child has to run the gauntlet of crossing fast traffic roads to reach school, while the sense of personal relationship among citizens within the ward is impaired. The size of each group is calculated on the basis of the junior school-child population, so as to satisfy the needs of school administration. As the report points out, this was not the only factor limiting the size of it to between 6,000 and 10,000 population, as research showed that the practical requirements of the adult population in the form of shops and meeting places happen to coincide with those of practical school administration.

It was clear from the beginning that the plan could not be complete if our deliberations were to be narrowed to the limits of the city boundary. The adjoining authorities would have to be consulted if there was to be an " overspill " from the overcrowded wards and the best agricultural land was to be preserved, tracts to be kept for recreation, beautiful wooded valleys and hillsides retained, and if a green belt was to be designed to avoid the formation of huge urban areas. The plan became regional in its aspect while the informal discussions with the officials of the adjoining authorities provided the foundation for the present Joint Planning Committee that will play an increasingly important part in the programme of future reconstruction.

The guiding principle behind the effort to find the answer to these problems was the " precinct principle." It suggests the division of the city into groups or precincts so that the people may live, work and play in healthy conditions and with safety while peaceful, conveniently planned and beautifully designed confines become a possibility.

Our cities have developed a too metropolitan emphasis in recent decades, reflecting itself noticeably upon the life of its citizens with the social organisations carrying on a hard fight against acute social apathy and delinquency. Exhortation to good citizenship does not bring the desired results, and it was considered that this habit can best be encouraged if the right sort of amenities were created where the people can organise themselves into neighbourhood groups. Each would have its own gathering centre consisting of a church, public library, club with its meeting hall, committee rooms, art and craft rooms, games rooms and outdoor recreation space. These buildings grouped about a " green " or " square " would restore the setting of the village green which, it is believed, will strengthen the work of the social organisations and give cohesion to their activities. A small shopping centre representing perhaps the sum total of the " round the corner " shops or the general stores would be located adjacent to this centre of social life. This perhaps is the most important contribution of contemporary planning, and the planners would have failed if this fundamental provision had been omitted.

In the appendix of the Report is found, for the first time in town planning history, a report on agriculture. It was considered essential to give proper attention to the agricultural value of the land in the region, drawing particular attention to the high market gardening value of the land on the fringes of the city. It gives a guide to the planner in his endeavours to avoid disturbing the economic balance of the farms that should be preserved. It is of particular interest to farmers in the region as its survey gives him, perhaps for the first time, a true perspective of where his farm stands in the national picture. He is able to decide upon what crops to specialise so that as transport improves and more distant markets come within his range he knows what national competition will be found.

In setting out to present a working basis or policy for reconstruction in the post-war years, the authors have completed the first stage in preparing for the tremendous tasks for rebuilding the devastated areas and for some of the other areas as they become ripe for re-development in the later years. This " master plan " is, in their opinion, sufficiently flexible to allow adjustments to be made as any change of social life or culture occurs in the more remote years of its realisation.

The second stage is just beginning : that of general discussion and thorough investigation of the proposals by all parties concerned. It is these parties, in consultation with Whitehall, who will decide the methods of procedure and administration so that all who have a just claim may find their rightful place in the scheme.

The third and final stage will then be the actual reconstruction which should have the unanimous support of the electorate so that the constructors may go forward unhampered by any unsatisfied demands.

Perhaps it is this second stage that is the most important for the success and degree of realisation of the plan for Plymouth, which has found in the local press reports, and among the people, unanimous approval. Plymouth has been given a lead that forms the basis for these deliberations : a picture of the possibilities that are well within its grasp. It will need courage and strength of purpose and a wider sense of duty to rise above the narrow limits of party politics and seek a strong united administration. Whatever results these deliberations may show, Plymouth is setting an example for the other bombed cities to follow. The opportunities lost in the days of Wren were London's loss and will not be repeated if the same spirit of unity that is given to the prosecution of the war is wholeheartedly given to the execution of the great and historical task that lies ahead —a city for the people in whose hands lie the prospects of realisation.

DEREK PLUMSTEAD, A.R.I.B.A.

WHAT WEST AFRICA NEEDS

When I was in West Africa recently, as a member of the Commission on Higher Education I was much impressed by the highly developed political consciousness of many of the younger Africans, particularly among the intelligentsia of the coastal towns. Every day their aspirations were expressed in conversation and in newspaper articles. I wish I could say that the aspirations were always based on a solid foundation of fact.

On my return I looked through my notes and reread an interview which had appeared in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION last August. The view expressed by Mr. Awoonor-Renner, an African member of the Accra Municipal Council on " What West Africans Want," summarised the more extreme aspirations correctly enough but I found in it just that failure to face the facts that I had found in Africa itself. Mr. Awoonor-Renner, for instance, said that " there is no re racial division in West Africa. We are one people." Again he declared that Hausa " understood by the vast majority in West Africa, and should be made the " compulsory language of education." He declared that " with the Englishman the more you know the more he despises you, while with the Frenchman the more you know the more he accepts you as equal." He recommends immediate universal suffrage, and says that unless Africans get self-government at once they will " not be able progress as a nation.". .

What are the facts ?

At the moment, far from the inhabitants of West Africa being " one people " or " a nation," here exists hardly the slightest basis for unity or nationhood. Even within a single territory, such s Nigeria, there is no common denominator between the northern Moslems, the naked pagans of the Plateau, the Fulani overlords, the advanced pagans, partly Christianised, of the south, and he proletariat and intelligentsia of cities like Lagos: even in the south, tribal affiliation is normally stronger than any other tie, whether of race, religion, or potential nationhood. In the Gold Coast, the pagans of the Northern Terri-ories provide a source of cheap labour for the richer south, notably for the cocoa-growers. In Sierra Leone, the interests of Freetown and the tiny Colony surrounding it have until very recent years stood in the way of the development of primitive peoples in the rest of the territory. The major fact about West Africa is the incredible diversity of its peoples and cultures, ranging from Stone Age survivals, through advanced priest-king tribalism and something very like feudalism, to incipient industrialism.

There is no lingua franca for West Africa as whole. Hausa has been spread by the Hausa raders, but is very much less widely known than, or instance, Swahili in East Africa. I presume hat Mr. Renner must know Hausa, but I am quite ertain that the majority even of educated men in he southern Gold Coast do not.

The reason for the adoption of teaching in the ernacular in primary schools is not the desire of e British to keep West Africans divided, but the xperience of educators that literacy is best cquired in the language spoken in the home, and hen paves the way for a readier acquisition of teracy in an alien tongue. In point of fact, the nly possible lingua franca for the British West frican territories is English; and as education extended, English will gradually assume that unction.

As regards the French, what Mr. Renner tates may have been true in the past, but is rtainly not so now. In Dakar I saw for myself at the French to-day mix much less with fricans than do the British. One of the most teresting features of life in British West Africa -day is the fact that when you go out to dinner, hether an official or an unofficial one, you may d yourself sitting next to an African woman. Lagos there is a joint European and African ub, which seems to be prospering.

As for immediate self-government, especially lf-government based on universal suffrage, the sults, if anyone were so foolish as to put it into actice, would be catastrophic. You cannot have pular elections on the basis of a 95 per cent. literate population split up into nearly water-ght units; you cannot have independence until ere is some common basis for unity; and you nnot have self-government until there are ough educated and self-disciplined Africans ailable to take positions of responsibility—hich is certainly not now the case.

The reader may ask, is there no positive, nstructive side to set against this negative iticism? The answer is assuredly yes. Politi-lly, the main advance will come through the velopment of local government—in African minology, the Native Authorities. These can and often are being transformed from feudal stems riddled with nepotism or from primitive bal organisations into democratic and repre-tative instruments, and are learning to take reasing responsibility. Culturally, much can done to give the West African an historical se and a feeling of pride in his achievements, ecially in the field of the arts. Economically, s essential that the standard of living should be least doubled in the near future, and quite ssible for this to be achieved. It can be done rtly by public works, partly by education, and campaigns for improved agriculture and health, rtly by the encouragement of agricultural and de co-operatives and small-scale industries; as basis for all these activities the African will e to learn the disagreeable lesson learnt by the Western world in the early Industrial Revolution, of hard and regular work. Finally, for the realisation of unity and nationhood, all these factors can co-operate, with the addition of English as a lingua franca. The first point is that West Africans must be given a common Something to be proud of and a common Something to hope for; and both these are possible of realisation.

JULIAN S. HUXLEY

THE SAME LANGUAGE

PETE was always saying " we talk the same language, don't we ? " But at Miami he swivelled right round on his seat in the drug-store and added: " You've been in America how long and you say you don't know what a clip-joint is ? "

With the elaborate and florid emphasis of true Americans he and Sam explained the term while we took our pineapple juice and watched them break our eggs over the hot plate. I felt safe with Pete and Sam, safe in Miami, safe that is in doing as Rome does. They belonged to the crew of an aeroplane which commuted between the continents of America, Africa and Europe. They were men of the world and they were Americans. Their self-assurance in the unreal glassy daylight of Miami told me that I was safe with them, come what may.

Not that there is any specific danger threatening an Englishman in the midst of a world war in Miami.

Alone, though, I should have been afraid of pinching myself and waking up in a disagreeable bed behind shut windows with the black-outs up. I should have feared the fabulous hotels, the white skyscraper fringe along that coast. I should have been like a stage-hand caught by the rising curtain, walking in solitariness along the boulevards beneath waving palms on to a surf-beaten beach of silver sand where the blondes moved statuesquely, seeking painted umbrellas against the arc-light of the Florida sun. I should have been afraid of eating too much shell-fish, too many hamburgers, bananas, pineapples, drinking too many high-balls and very cold brisk millionaire cocktails. I should have been faint-hearted with all the people who talk Anglo-American relations—that hobby as insidious and unintoxicating as chain tea-drinking or the coca-cola habit—but Pete always said " we talk the same language, don't we ? " : and that always settled everything.

Miami was a stopover point on our journey. We were waiting for the weather to clear in the Caribbean. We had no business there in that world built for pleasure rather than business. Every façade suggested pleasure, clean, edible, brittle as sugar icing. Every vista led the eye towards water and waving palms. Every notice told you what you could do with yourself and your money. Your money might be glamorised into War Bonds too, though. Your second cup of coffee—please don't embarrass the management by asking for it. The war's most dramatic impact, however, was the very material of battle. From every state of America had come bodies, young, supple, straight, all the best a nation has. Thousands of young men were training and toughening in the bright air where the rich and the leisured once wooed their happiness.

Pete and Sam, who together had bought carpets in India, crawled the pubs of Glasgow, made dates in Montreal, taken food poisoning in Cairo, met a shark face to face in West Africa, still retained an agreeable curiosity towards their own country. Would we do Miami by night, yes sir!

We began at the Kitty Davis Airliner, " A Night Club in the Air," where an article written by no less a celebrity than Quentin Reynolds is distributed to guests. " Kitty Davis was America's only really big-time woman night club operator, and in many ways she had picked up the mantle dropped by the late Texas Guinan," explains Mr. Reynolds, who, for a much travelled man, rather enthusiastically describes this Miami Beach enterprise: " The *motif* is so aeronautical that at times you actually fancy you hear the whirr of wings! And, as you look at the murals, decorations, and various uniforms of the staff you are sure that you have heard them and that you are travelling at 200 miles an hour . . ." A modest footnote by Kitty Davis herself adds: " I will be happy to autograph this for you."

Pete and Sam got most of their fun by listening to see if " you hear the whirr of wings " : while the house provided a decorous floor-show, wonderful food and Scotch at a reasonable price. I was egged on to ask to see Miss Davis and when she was out the management gave me sixty-seven boxes of pocket matches. Pete and Sam then said we'd go places.

In Miami town, separated from the beach by an arterial road in moonlight like a silver rod laid across the water, we visited an equally decorous if less streamlined entertainment called the Clover Club, which made no offers of autographs and gave away match boxes in twos and threes, sticking austerely to solid food, Scotch and a floor show. Pete and Sam, moved then by pride of country or by courageous insatiability, said that that was not all. We should still go places.

Very soon our party, which had grown in size and volubility, turned sharp right from the street floodlit with the uniform shops where the toughening recruit could see himself with any rank in any climate. We filed through a tunnel which might be said to be filled with dark expectancy but which probably was just a dark side entrance—and the music was a juke-box playing at the far end. Sam said we had gotten places: and we poured out of the passage into an arena of trellis work, paper roses, wicker tables and subdued lighting which ran through the gamut of orange, indigo, violet, and rose according to the mood of the juke-music. There were little tables around: and the space in the middle which looked like a roller skating rink was for dancing.

There was a round of beer which languished palely in the dusk and which tasted of sweet cobwebs. Then the fun began. Our hostess approached and sat on Sam's knee. " You sweetie-pie," she said: " they call you Sam, don't they ! " One by one she introduced a team of girls who marched forward from the shadows. Several of us got our knees under the table in time and these girls sat along with us upon hard chairs but only after each of us had bought a book of tickets entitling us to their company. They explained that they were hard working girls, adamantly virtuous, doing this job in the kaleidoscopic shadows for a decent, though bare living. Every time a waiter came within earshot they ordered drinks. They were only allowed to drink grape juice. Beer having run out, the gentlemen were to drink white wine. The white wine was called Moselle and it had a metallic taste as if it had found its way down the Rhine to Cologne, there been mixed with the scent of the country and then shipped across the ocean in tin pails. Each glass seemed to cost about as much as the cost of a whole evening at the " Night Club In The Air." My girl, who came from " way back in the country, " encouraged me by saying that she took commission on each drink and that was why she had to accept the grape juice each time. The juke-box kept on playing records and sometimes, with the trance-like indifference of complete strangers, we danced. I glanced at Pete and Sam because I was not sure that I could pay for a lot more Moselle. They must be thinking so too. Then there was a good tune and when I stood up to dance my partner said " Time's up, Booboo (she called me Booboo all the time). You'll have to get another book of tickets."

We stopped by the desk of the hostess who had once sat on Sam's knee while I bought a book of tickets with the very linings of my pockets. " I shouldn't have thought we had danced through a whole book yet," I said, just to make things go with a swing. " You silly Booboo," said my partner. "We charge by the number of dances played—whether you dance them or not."

This companionship was turning out so expensive that I sought out Pete and Sam to see if they were enjoying some glamour which I had missed. "It's a clip-joint, that's what it is," Pete said. "Let's go."

I think he bought us out. Our shuffling exit through the indigo twilight was not popular with the management; and the hard-working, wholly virtuous partners reproached us with high-school indignation. "Booboo," said the voice from way back in the country. "I'm only asking you for ten per cent."

We pooled our leavings outside in the staring moonlight, and in the taxi which we could just afford that world-travelling unsophisticate Pete murmured: "Now, Booboo, I guess you know what a clip-joint is. We talk the same language, don't we?"

JOHN PUDNEY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Last of Summer," at the Phoenix

Since a novel contains about six times more words than a play, a writer who has enough material for a novel is likely to have too much for a play, unless he possesses Ibsen's genius for concentrating a vast bulk of biography by a sort of divine dehydration. With the help of Mr. John Perry, Miss Kate O'Brien has provided a *précis* of her novel, but the result is too leisurely to be a play. Two acts empty of suspense are devoted to preparing some excellent scenes in the third. Moreover, we fail to accept the author's point of view. An Irish farmer and a French film-actress fall in love; his possessive mother prevents the marriage by a bravura display of mendacity; and the curtain falls on wickedness triumphant over virtue in tears. But vile as are the mother's motives and methods, we sigh—if we sigh at all—with relief. The hero doesn't know Sidney Bernstein from Henri, the heroine can't tell a hock from a hack; and since the couple have nothing in common but desire, the marriage could only be a disaster. The good that can be done with the worst of motives provides a good theme for comedy, but the authors neglect this to provide what they consider an unhappy ending. Miss Fay Compton gives, as always, a flawless performance, and the wonder grows that a newcomer like Miss Margaret Johnston is not swept right off the stage. She is indeed most attractive, but she is also something more. It was wickedly delightful to watch her kittenish poses on the sofa, to hear her ask a trivial question about the size of a key with the eagerness of Cleopatra's "Is he married?" Here was a beautifully uncaricatured portrayal of that over-expressiveness in private life which is a vocational disease of actresses. Since the producer is Mr. Gielgud, Miss Johnston doubtless has benefited by his guidance, but her performance is very intelligent and moving. Miss Ada Reeve provides comic relief with skill and energy, in style more Camberwell than County Clare; Mr. Fred O'Donovan is wasted on a very thin part, Miss Hazel Terry plays a girl about to become a nun with a quiet realism that will shock those who take their views in convents from Protestant films. The supporting cast is excellent. Mr. Michael Relph's set displays Adam splendours that accord ill with the brogue so painstakingly adopted by the players.

Ballets Jooss, at the Haymarket

Two ballets new to Londoners were given at the Haymarket on Monday. *Sailor's Fancy*, the first of these, is a conventionally gay frolic about three sailors, their girls at home and girls in port. The bright poster appeal tends to become tedious even in so short a piece, and very little use is made of the changes of the style, Spanish, Turkish and Negro. In a genre where *Façade* has triumphed, it seemed not good enough. This was followed by *Old Vienna*, near-music and near-dance of a sort which only emphasises the limitations of Jooss technique; *Pavane*, a grave and austere lament, with the advantage of Ravel's music, readjusted the balance. The programme ended with *The Prodigal*, the second of the new ballets; and here, whether one likes the method or not, our attentions and sympathies were engaged. Top lighting, which had the effect of isolating the figures, percussive piano, expressive pause, gesture and tableau combined forcibly to make a ballet that sometimes grated but was never dull. There were brilliant moments: the insinuations of a mysterious companion, the flight from temptation, the hard road back; and the movement of a single figure against a crowd was employed dramatically in a number of ways. This is an art owing more to expressionist films and plays than to ballet, and capable of beauty as well as harshness. After *The Big City* and *The Green Table* (straight expressionism and satire), it is the most ambitious and successful of the Jooss productions.

THE MOVIES

Invasion Newsreel at Studio Two
"The Way Ahead," at the Odeon
"Phantom Lady," at the Tivoli
"In Our Time," at Warners

Queues twenty-five yards long outside the news theatres testified to the main drama of this week and of many weeks to come. One waits for everything nowadays, from loaves to Frank Sinatra; and here, for once, was something worth standing in the rain for. At Studio Two, a "March of Time" on Ireland preceded the invasion films; Eire's neutrality and the independence and poetry of Irish lives were argued in tones agreeably unlike the challenging voice we know so well. An impartial and friendly statement which, even at this crisis of the war, should make a few people recognise the points of Ireland's neutrality. (I remembered the rumour, strong on invasion day, that we had marched across the border from Ulster.) The invasion films (Gaumont British and British Paramount) gave us those close-ups and bird's-eye views that one missed from reading the newspapers. Marching men and "ducks" poured along a road from the Downs; the camouflaged boats touched sides in harbour; paratroops blackened their faces and turned over the first issue of French notes (the sight of these men brought the first spontaneous cheer I have heard in a cinema for months); the big bombers went out over Normandy, unravelling bombs a dozen at a time, like a rope-ladder let down; the camera on a fighter pointed earthwards, jarring as the rockets streamed ahead; we saw sections of that gigantic invasion fleet spread out below, and it took a few seconds to distinguish the white dots as barrage balloons; then the beach-head, tanks, guns, cars and men wading through the shallows—Dunkirk in reverse. All that one sees of the enemy is a puff of smoke from a cliff battery, a plane shot to fragments in the air, a prisoner with a blood-soaked bandage. The Gaumont British announcer found it necessary to emphasise the courage of the men taking part in this expedition; unnecessary, one would have thought, though perhaps in cutting the raw material it was felt that the appalling difficulties and dangers had been left unstressed. We have always been inclined, rather stupidly, to prune our war documentaries so that they shan't offend the queasy. This first instalment of the invasion newsreels made by British and American cameramen promises well for the future.

This was the right moment for showing *The Way Ahead*, though at any time it would have made its mark. The film sets out to show a handful of civilians being slowly turned into soldiers; it begins before calling up, and ends with action in North Africa; and the transformation is depicted by Carol Reed with a skill in which the documentary background never swamps the story. Class distinctions, the right to grumble, fatigues and leaves, battle training gone through again and again with a stop-watch: this is the sort of realism in which English films now excel. David Niven makes a very charming and efficient lieutenant; Stanley Holloway matches his recent performance in *This Happy Breed* with another as convincing. First-rate dialogue by Peter Ustinov, who also gives a brilliant character study of a shambling café proprietor. *The Way Ahead* will add immensely to the prestige of English films if our best quality in film making as well as in national character is at all exportable.

Phantom Lady. Very good American thriller about a strangling and an alibi. New York at night, wet streets, the Elevated, bars, squalid apartments, obsession, crime.

In Our Time takes us to Poland on the eve of war. Charming love story (Ida Lupino and Paul Henreid), and democracy is beginning to make its way against feudalism when the Nazis intervene. Not very exciting, but thoughtful, agreeably acted, and photographed, and giving the impression—which I can't check—that the background is more solid than usual.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

LISTENING POST

[*President Roosevelt has a plan for a new French Government, with Albert Lebrun as President—Report in daily paper.*]

AMERICA is seated
At her global listening post,
Till the Wehrmacht is defeated
By her liberating host,
Proclaiming her assistance
To a people's Government
And leaders of resistance
On the far-off Continent.

Her full support is guaranteed
To forces democratic,
But she cannot hear them clearly,
There is such a lot of static,
The air is such a Babel
And the jamming is so strong
That when the leaders' names come through
She always gets them wrong.

She is perfectly impartial,
She respects the people's voice,
When they vote for King or Marshal
She applauds the nation's choice,
So when her armies routed
The force of Kesselring,
She thought Italians shouted
For Badoglio and the King.

She nominated Victor
To protect the Constitution,
Badoglio to lead
The anti-Fascist revolution,
Then found to her astonishment
Italians preferred
Another individual
Whose name she hadn't heard.

When leaders were selected
For the ruling of Algiers,
Her hearing was affected
By the ringing in the ears;
She banked on French devotion
For Darlan and Giraud,
But after their promotion
She learned they had to go.

She saw the Admiral installed
(By popular decision)
And then discovered there had been
An error in transmission,
And when this misunderstanding
Had been finally removed
All Frenchmen hoped her hearing
Would be very much improved.

Now patriots are calling
From the land of Lafayette,
But reception is appalling
And she cannot hear them yet.
She gives her full attention
To the choice the French proclaim—
She desires no intervention
But she cannot catch the name.

She welcomes freedom's leaders
In the order of appearance,
But she suffers from a lot
Of atmospheric interference.
She cannot catch the words of France,
France speaks a foreign tongue,
And when they really say "de Gaulle"
She thinks they cry "Lebrun!"

SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

SAVINGS WEEKS

Sir,—Your remarks in last Saturday's "Comments" on Savings Weeks and "Salute the Soldier" campaigns prompt me to relate my first-hand experience in a small place and which illustrates a practice, which is, no doubt, followed all over the country.

Long before the actual start of the "week" the local bank managers get busy searching their registers for customers to be selected as potential "milking cows." Once they have decided they go over to the attack and all customers thus chosen are being invited into the manager's sanctuary. Here they are "prepared" and by appeals to their patriotic feelings persuaded to sign on the dotted line, often weeks before the opening of the local "week" and even more so during the days preceding the "week." People with small accounts, never before found worthy of so much as a glance, are now being treated as the most appreciated customers for the sake of a couple of Savings Certificates or £5 Defence Bonds which to purchase for the "week" is represented almost as a holy duty.

Then the "week's" committee are sending out letters asking for investments during their week to all companies and people of any importance, very often also to such firms which have no local connections whatsoever, first of all, of course, to the Prudential. Thus business firms or others are asked to contribute to "weeks" in quite different parts of the country and they do so to some extent. Thus the week's total is made to swell. The local people do not realise, of course, what is going on and believe it to be all their own effort.

In my particular case a co-operative society contributed 25 per cent. of the grand total. In addition, official posters proclaim that the amount raised will be used to equip say 1,600 soldiers or to buy a tank or two Mosquitoes, and the people believe it. Otherwise there would be very little forthcoming.

Sir John Anderson admitted that the investments of the banks, insurance companies, etc., actually represent the savings of their customers, policy-holders, etc., which, in my opinion would mean that the little man with his few savings spread over a number of places, like friendly society, insurance company, Post Office Savings Bank, etc., is caught perhaps three or four times or more, whereas real wealth contributes *in proportion* much less than its due.

The humbug of these weeks calls for the plain truth, which I believe will not deter people from saving if they are also told, that it has to be done to prevent a worse evil. But at the same time there are still other resources remaining to be tapped more vigorously.

"Suffolk"

UNRRA FOR INDIA

Sir,—On January 25, 1944, the House of Representatives passed an amendment to an UNRRA appropriation bill recommending the inclusion of India within the scope of UNRRA's activities. In April, the Indian Central Legislature passed a similar resolution. Sir Azizul-Huq, speaking for the Government, said that, though the House of Representative's recommendation would be placed before the UNRRA Council, he could not give any indication as to the India Government's attitude to the proposal. From past public statements by responsible officials as well as Col. Llewellyn's statement at Atlantic City, we may presume that the British and Indian Government representatives will oppose it. Yet, it is agreed by all that relief needs arising from such a calamity as Bengal has gone through can never be met by private appeals alone. UNRRA, which was brought into being as an international authority to provide relief on a large scale, and to which India is contributing 1 per cent. of her national income, is the only organisation capable of dealing with the problem.

I am assured by competent international lawyers that there is no legal obstacle to such an extension of UNRRA's activity. It is purely a matter of policy of the Governments concerned.

On the strength of a recent correspondence on this subject, in the *Manchester Guardian*, the High Commissioner for India is already making representations to New Delhi. Letters from India suggest that a new hope is spreading among the millions of the undernourished that the British public will urge their Government not to oppose the proposal for UNRRA aid to India. May I hope that your readers will exert their powerful influence in this matter?

D. M. Sen

JUSTICES' CLERKS

Sir,—I have been authorised to inform you of the views of the Howard League for Penal Reform upon the recent recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Justices Clerks. These can be epitomised as follows :—

1. Justices' Clerks should be full-time officers and constitute a body with civil service status, individuals being transferable from one court to another, as at present happens advantageously in the Metropolitan area. They should begin as assistant clerks. This would make necessary the grouping of existing courts under one clerk in many districts.

2. It is important that the continuance of private practice coincident with an important semi-judicial office should cease without delay. Failing establishment of a whole time service, five years grace only should be given to existing holders. Official conduct of licensing work with private practice should cease at once.

3. The lowest age of appointments of clerks should be 23, to avoid a gap between qualification and appointment, and the loss of good young men to the new profession. A retiring age of 65 is desirable, it being compulsory at 72.

4. The *ad hoc* Committees recommended for appointing clerks would have the disadvantages of "local interest" without expressing the will of a coherent responsible local body. Appointments should be made by the Lord Chancellor on the advice of an advisory committee, on which not more than one-half of the personnel should be political.

5. It is preferable that clerks should rule in matters of law and procedure, but failing that "the clerk should record in his register when justices do not take his advice." This would have a deterrent effect upon the justices.

6. The personnel of the Bench should be changed gradually by rota so as to obviate adjourned cases being dealt with by an entirely new Bench as far as possible. Justices to retire at 65 years.

7. The dock should be abolished, and the prisoner provided with a table and chair, and facilities for making notes.

Ambrose Appellbe

WHITE AND BLACK

Sir,—I was dining in the restaurant of a well-known West End hotel the other night. At a table near me a man in a torpor of drunkenness lolled face down on the cloth. The management were kind to him, roused him with a gentle pat, comforted him with black coffee, lit his cigarette and left him to drop forward again over his table. A sober but black soldier came in. The management refused to serve him. Full of resignation he retraced his steps to the entrance and disappeared into the night. Meanwhile the white man lolled on in peace and plenty. The little waitress, probably below conscription age, flared up in a truly noble indignation and rated the head waiter soundly and roundly for turning the black man away. No one else moved.

Iris Holland Rogers

CLERICAL DISCIPLINE

Sir,—It will be unfortunate if the discussion provoked by the Rev. Gilbert Cope's article on the above subject is allowed to lapse without drawing attention to one very serious lack in the present proposals for Clerical Discipline. It is to be hoped that Mr. Higginson or some other member of the Church

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JONATHAN CAPE

Assembly will draw attention to the fact that no provision is made for securing that any clergyman shall have access to all documents which concern his conduct and character. As the law stands at present he is liable, at the hands of an unscrupulous Bishop, to be deprived of the common right of a British citizen to be treated as innocent of any accusations made concerning him until he is proved to be guilty and to have all accusations laid before him for scrutiny. At present a clergyman has no such rights and the legal provision of "Privileged" can prevent his securing of the right of access to documents in order either to know the names of accusers or even to discover whether the documents are forgeries or not. I am aware of the pressure on your space or I could enlarge at much length on the necessity for ending the present system (if such it can be called) of allowing the reputations of the clergy to depend on a "Gentlemen's Agreement" with the Bishops.

JOHN CORNER SPOKES

MINERS' PAY

SIR,—Mr. B. L. Coombes's "Dusty Retort" is very true of the attitude of the working miner to-day. A negative attitude which puts pay first; one which is profoundly disturbing for those who believe in the miners' cause. "Our patriotism is no deeper than our pockets," they say. No ideals, no constructive plan for the future.

It would be interesting to have more facts about Mr. Coombes's wages. Was he working on a piece-rate? Are not piece-rates standard for his class of work throughout the colliery and apply to all roadway repairers? Were not his rates of pay fixed between the Union and the management? If so, the officials had no power to pay him more, and in any case they cannot raise wages without authority from above. Very likely the officials themselves were carrying home less money than Mr. Coombes himself; this is the case in many areas since the recent miners' wage increase. How was it that Mr. Coombes had such an inexperienced mate—surely he was free to select whom he would?

Mr. Coombes will be doing his fellow workers and his industry more service if he forgets petty grievances and turns his mind to the coming post-war problems. How can we avoid slumps and crises in the years to come, with their attendant strikes and misery?

COLLIERY OFFICIAL

TRAINING OF TEACHERS

SIR,—If my letter of June 3rd "means anything," and if Prof. Paton "understands me rightly," I was, it appears, quite dishonestly comparing first-year pass degree courses in Scotland with first-year honours courses in London, to the detriment of the former.

I appreciate that my letter must have proved quite difficult to one accustomed to reading the invariably lucid dissertations of students and philosophers; but unfortunately it contains no mention whatever of honours degrees, and so could hardly have been so understood. Prof. Paton must mean that if London University regulations are, as he hopes, for the sake of his case, and assumes, without consulting them, I was making the comparison he suggests. It happens, however, that the question of a pass or honours course does not arise in London University until a student has successfully completed his first year. In short, I was comparing "like with like," as exhorted to do.

Technical College,
Huddersfield.

CHARLES RECORD

THE PLURAL VOTE

SIR,—In your current issue in your article on the Speaker's Conference you say:—"All told, these plural votes under the two categories [i.e. the University votes and the business premises votes] may number as many as five millions among the 31 million registered electors."

The actual facts are that in 1937 the register of University voters numbered about 176,000, and of the business qualification some 375,000, and of the latter the compromise solution proposed by the Speaker's Conference would get rid of about 150,000. Your figure is therefore about twelve times too high.

If you prefer, you are entitled to say that the University plural voters return 12 out of 615 members, and that the business voters will number some 225,000 out of the 31 million in the remaining constituencies.

F. W. PETHICK-LAWRENCE

BRITISH PRISONERS OF WAR

SIR,—I have just seen the letter from Mrs. J. B. Priestley which appeared in your issue of June 3rd, and am surprised that the British Prisoners of War Books and Games Fund and Forget-me-Not League is stated to be the only national fund helping individual prisoners. As one of the voluntary spare-time helpers at the Prisoners of War Education Books Organisation of the Red Cross and Order of St. John, which has its offices at the New Bodleian Library in Oxford, I can vouch for the fact that the great bulk of the work is in dealing with the needs of individuals. Books are, it is true, sent to Camp Libraries, but in addition to this every officer or man who wants books on any subject, whether for examination purposes or not, is separately dealt with and his request met as far as is possible in the present shortage of books; a task which sometimes entails a considerable amount of research.

Prisoners need all the help that can be given them, and the purpose of this letter is not to criticise the work of the Books and Games Fund, but to point out that equally individual work is done by the Red Cross.

St. Hilda's College,
Oxford.

J. de L. MANN

[Mrs. Priestley writes:—My point was that the British Prisoners of War Books and Games Fund, which is a purely voluntary society, financed by appeals and not charging for the articles sent, is in a position to make its contacts and correspondence with prisoners peculiarly personal. In fact the organisation advises relatives of prisoners to contact the Red Cross in all cases where food, clothing or university courses are concerned.—[ED., *N. S. & N.*]

FAIR TRADE

SIR,—In your issue of June 10th you refer to "Organisations for the enforcement of a code of fair practice" by certain trade branches, and cite as an example a "Hardware Trade Alliance." I consider this kind of private price regulation not at all to the disadvantage of the public provided the Government impose a strict control on them, say, by the Board of Trade. The B.O.T. would issue regulations for the protection of the consumers, and an official permanent price control body's consent would be made necessary for putting the "code" into practice.

The "code" will work only by considering varying maximum and minimum price scales for manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers alike, whether they are small or single-man-retailers, Co-ops., multiple stores and similar establishments, or wholesale organisations, etc., in order to regulate their selling prices in proper proportion to their overhead and distribution expenses.

That means that the existing wartime price control would be adapted and reduced to the above-mentioned purpose.

W. G. FEUCHTWANG

"Q"

SIR,—The Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, who have announced the forthcoming publication of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's unfinished *Memories and Opinions*, have commissioned me to write a book dealing mainly with his later life. His family have given their approval.

I shall be very grateful for the loan of letters or other relevant material. Anything lent to me will be returned with as little delay as possible.

Jesus College,
Cambridge.

F. BRITTAIN

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COLLINS

BOOKS IN GENERAL

All beauty and generosity and courage, Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire has never been much more real to us than a princess in a fairy-tale. We see her chiefly through the eyes of others—relations, friends, traducers and the artists who have left such various versions of her features. Among the talkative and substantial figures of her mother and her sister, of Fox, Sheridan and the Regent, she glimmers an elusive and bewitching wraith. How exciting then, for those who enjoy the society of the dead, to read in the preface to Miss Leveson Gower's book* that she has new material, letters belonging to the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Bessborough, Lord Halifax and the Trustees of Castle Howard. (An informative article in a magazine by Lord Spencer makes us regret that she apparently has not penetrated to the muniment-room at Althorp.) Miss Leveson Gower has already, in collaboration with her father, given us a good and informative book about Georgiana's daughter, "Hary-O." We begin therefore with delighted anticipation.

The opening sentences give us pause.

> The rough tussocky grass which tripped up Georgiana Spencer was an amusing obstacle to her rather than an irritation. If she could catch the butterfly in spite of the hummocks, in spite of the dew-drenched muslin gown cluttering her ankles, in spite of the sun in her eyes, she felt that it would be a prize worth achieving.

Surely the authoress is not going to treat us to the figments of her fancy in the tedious manner of the "popular" biographer? We look again at the preface: "Everything I have written about her is fact, save where, in one or two instances, when I have been driven to conjecture, I have indicated otherwise." Doubtless then there is a letter in which the youthful Georgiana describes her amusement at the hummocks and the dew-drenched muslin. We read on; our confidence dwindles; and it is put to a very severe test when we come to the honeymoon at Chatsworth.

> The tapestries and the hangings would hardly stir in the golden autumn air, while in the huge painted hall Cæsar was murdered all unconscious of the pity in her eyes.

This may be thought fine writing or mere tushery. One may wonder how Caesar could have been anything but unconscious of pity in the eyes of a woman born eighteen centuries after his death. But the point is—did Georgiana feel pity for Caesar? It is unusual for the paintings of Verrio or Laguerre to excite such emotions; and if on this occasion they did, the fact would throw light on the Duchess's peculiar sensibility. We continue. The Duke, we are told, hates to be called before 4 p.m. (p. 43) and he normally preferred to rise at three o'clock (p. 133)—did the Duke change his habits or is the biographer careless? Again about the Duchess's child by Grey:

> When she thought of Eliza, it was always to the accompaniment of the nostalgic tune she and her sister used to sing—the words "que le jour me dure, passé loin de toi" would run through her head and she would sigh a little fearfully.

An author is of course entitled to make public his daydreams about historical characters. But he must not try to pass them off on us as matters of fact. Miss Leveson Gower assures us that she never commits this impropriety, and of course I take her word for it. A letter therefore must exist in which the Duchess describes her feelings for this child, and the tune that runs through her head. How interesting such a letter would be! How can we forgive Miss Leveson Gower for keeping it to herself?

But she is not always so ungenerous, and if the student of the period can control his exasperation he will find some new material that is properly presented. Moreover Miss Leveson Gower is often shrewd in her judgment of character. One may doubt whether Lady Spencer was quite the paragon she is here made to appear, but the contrast between the Duchess and Lady Elizabeth Foster is excellently defined.

> Georgiana did not know what deliberation or hesitation meant. She invariably leaped before she looked, which alarmed and irritated the Duke, which in turn made her shy and almost frightened of him. Lady Liz, on the contrary, was a creature of calculation; she never made a spontaneous gesture or uttered an unpremeditated word. She was soft, ingratiating and humble in her approach. Georgiana never thought about herself. Elizabeth never thought about anything else . . .

The warm friendship between these two women, the wife and the mistress of the Duke, has excited many surmises. Miss Leveson Gower offers an explanation that seems rather far-fetched. After seven years of despairing barrenness, the Duchess conceived while Lady Elizabeth was with her at Bath. "In her mind crazed with joy, she identifies Bess's influence, Bess's love, with the fulfilment of her heart's desire." This seems to be based chiefly on a letter she wrote to Lady Elizabeth—"You have saved your brother Canis" (Canis is the Duke's nickname). Are we then to suppose that the Duke had been impotent until Lady Elizabeth lit the flame, and that the Duchess profited? Such an hypothesis would not be psychologically impossible, but it does not cover all the facts, and I do not gather that Miss Leveson Gower puts it forward. The simplest explanation of this *ménage à trois* seems to me also the most probable: the Duchess was fascinated by Lady Elizabeth's charm—Gibbon called her "irresistible"—and was thankful to have the boring Duke taken off her hands.

Miss Leveson Gower informs us—on what evidence she does not say—that the Duchess believed for four years that the friendship between her husband and her friend was innocent; and it is suggested that the shock when she was told the truth was almost mortal. Can we believe that she was so extravagantly blind? Here is part of a letter to her mother:

> It has happened to me with people who have influence over me to have perfectly seized the reason of their wishing me to do some one thing or other which I did not like to do, & that tho they did not disclose their real motive, I have been saying to myself all the time they have been persuading me, "I know why you wish me to do so and so," & yet with this full conviction, instead of owning it & in spite of disliking the thing, I have done it because I was desired & have pretended to believe every word that was said to me, so that I actually have taken more pains to be a Dupe than most people do to shew they cannot be outwitted.

If the "people who have influence over me" are the Duke and Lady Elizabeth, this would seem a likely account of the blindness that Miss Leveson Gower assumes to be genuine. But as so often, whether from ignorance or secretiveness, she omits to give the date of the letter.

The authoress tells us that when she was a child she was shown a portrait of Georgiana: "That's your great-great-grandmother, the beautiful Duchess who kissed a butcher." And the chapter devoted to the Westminster Election is particularly interesting. It shows that when, at the instance of her mother the Duchess has retired from canvassing, the Duke of Portland brought all his weight to bear in a letter that successfully fetched her back to the fray. Fox, or so Miss Leveson Gower likes to imagine, disapproved.

> Leaning against the thin wall between our times, we can almost hear Fox's passionate outburst:
>
> "It's vile, vile," he cried. "That they should touch *you*, besmirch you like this is unthinkable. You're the only clean woman in London. . . ."
>
> "Oh, Charles," she broke in, "how can you say such a thing? Think of Harriet."
>
> "I don't care," he said. "It's you who are their quarry. It's got to stop—*you've* got to stop."
>
> There was a silence between them, hot, heavy, unresolved. Fox was muttering almost to himself. . . .

And so it goes on, in a style that would win the applause of Mr. Cecil B. de Mille.

The newspapers got to work again:

> To be hired for the day; Several PAIR of RUBY POUTING LIPS of the FIRST QUALITY. To be kissed by rum Dukes, queer Dukes, Butchers, Draymen, Dustmen and Chimney sweepers. Please to enquire at Devon & Cos. Crimson Pouting Warehouse, Piccadilly.

Georgiana denied the story of the kiss; "My sister and Ly.—were both kiss'd, so it's very hard I who was not shd. have the reputation for it."

Miss Leveson Gower does not throw much light on the Duchess's affair with Grey. There is no documentary evidence of any kind about it, she tells us, adding: "That Grey was her only lover is certain for, many years after, she herself told her son this, and she would not have made this admission had it not been true." Surely a confusion of thought. She would not have admitted to an affair with Grey, if she had not had one. But if Grey was not her only lover, she might very naturally have concealed the fact from her son.

Miss Leveson Gower asserts, plausibly, that Grey fell in love with the Duchess in 1786, but that she did not crown his flame till she had given the Duke his heir in 1790. A further surmise is that her child by Grey was born at Aix in January 1792. Eliza Courtnay—this was the name selected—never was admitted, it seems, to the miscellaneous nurseries of Devonshire House. It is disappointing to learn nothing of her subsequent fate. Of Charlotte, the Duke's child by a milliner, we catch glimpses. In 1788 she was acting as secretary to the Duchess at Chatsworth; and in the following year she joined her half-sister, the Duke's daughter by Lady Elizabeth, as a *pensionnaire* in a French family. Then she too disappears.

The book gives a pleasant picture of the Duchess with Gibbon at Lausanne:

> He has a beautiful little Pavillion on his Terrace where after tea we had musick and our little Russian Princess and her friend danc'd Russian dances—afterwards they sung a great deal. . . . Mr. Gibbon is very clever but remarkably ugly and wears a green jockey cap to keep the light from his Eyes when he walks in his garden. . . .

Here also was the future Caroline Lamb:

> She is very naughty and says anything that comes into her head which is very distressing—she told poor Mr. Gibbon, who has the misfortune of being very ugly, that his big face frighten'd the little puppy with whom he was playing. . . .

Alas, soon the prettiness turns to horror, Gainsborough to Hogarth. The Duchess begins to lose her sight. A tourniquet constricts her neck, to force the blood into the eyeball, on which leeches are then applied. Grey marries. Georgiana lives on, a devoted mother, for twelve years. There are further surgical operations. There are, as always, the debts that she can never bring herself to confess, though to a man of the Duke's fabulous wealth they would have been insignificant. She died in 1806, the year that was to deprive England of Pitt and her beloved Fox.

She was always clear-sighted about herself:

> It is my misfortune that every turn I take towards anything like study is by such starts that it is no use to me—I am too eager and too easily disgusted, as you may observe I only succeed in what is to be obtained in a short time.

She wrote her own epitaph—a period-piece that ought to be inscribed on an urn with a weeping Grace draped around it. It insists upon her religious principles and her repentance. She seems to have given it to Grey—very characteristic this of the Age of Sentiment in which unlawful pleasures commonly excited gratitude towards the Saviour. But the epitaph is moving as well as sentimental. And five lines from it make a just self-portrait:

> And it was the cause of poignant regret when she discovered
> That she herself had destroyed the fairest prospect of happiness.
> But if it was her misery to have offended her friends
> It was her Pride & Glory
> That she ever was beloved and always forgiven.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

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* *The Face Without a Frown.* By Iris Leveson Gower. *Muller.* 15s.

SPAIN IN BRIEF

The Civilisation of Spain. By J. B. TREND. *Oxford University Press.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

I can think of no better brief introduction to the story of Spanish civilisation than this little book, which is no more than 200 pages long. It is extremely readable. Although compressed, it does not skip what ought not to be skipped, nor does it distort. It confines itself to the implications of politics. In each period from the earliest days Professor Trend concentrates on the deposit of history rather than the making of it, the thought of the time, the achievement and the failures; and the general judgment is of the kind that would have been approved by the remarkable band of liberal teachers—men like Giner, Ramon y Cajal, Altamira—who were beginning to transform the Spanish mind before the Civil War scattered them and destroyed their work. The fact that the work of such men always is destroyed in every generation in Spain, so that, almost monotonously, the best brains are sooner or later driven abroad, has led many writers to retreat from information and to base their Spanish history on the Spanish taste for religious fatalism. Obviously (they argue) a non-European country which has rejected the Rennaissance, the French Revolution and our kinds of democracy, must have sunk its roots in other soil—perhaps in the soil of the other world. And Professor Trend would no doubt be attacked—especially since the disillusion of the Civil War—for not perceiving the peculiar passion of the Catholic mystique. But this religious simplification of the Spanish case cannot stand historical inquiry any more than the black-and-white, anti-religious case so frequently made by the European Left. The chain of material causation is often entangled in Spanish history, but the links are joined and can be traced.

"Often in Spain one comes across a vast church nobly designed on the grandest scale, then left unfinished and ragged, as if some great vision had been broken off," writes Professor Trend. "In the course of Spanish history much gigantic effort and many magnanimous enterprises have come to a ragged ending." Why has the will failed? How is it that men and women who seem, at first sight, more complete than any other in Europe, should fail in this collective completeness? Professor Trend sets out the main theories about the decadence that came to Spain in the 17th century: a pettifogging despotism that could not work as efficiently as a modern dictatorship because it lacked speed of communication; the failure of central government which threw Spanish life back into small unconnected local groups; the closed, siege-mind of a religion which was nominally Catholic but which had become a fanatical religious imperialism; the extermination of the Moriscos who had made a poor or difficult land rich; and, above all—inflation, the rise in prices and the financial chaos caused by the flood of treasure brought in from South America:

> Silver prices in the first quarter of the sixteenth century had risen about 50 per cent.; in the first half they had more than doubled. Then came the invention of the mercury amalgam process for extracting silver; and that, with the discovery of the Mexican silver mines of Guanajuato and Zacatecas, resulted in a deluge of silver which upset prices and wages and all arrangements between debtors and creditors. By 1601, the average price level in Spain was more than four times what it had been a century earlier. Madrid suffered particularly from this economic crisis; and the luxurious court, with its Burgundian display and the fantastic etiquette which had gradually become naturalised in Spain and grafted on the homely court life of Ferdinand and Isabel, only added to the financial stringency, rather than bringing money into the town and alleviating the crisis. . . . Spanish silver went abroad in paying for imports which, now the Moriscos had gone, included wheat. By 1623 bronze cuartos were being used more than silver reales; in the next 25 years silver money disappeared. . . . Spain the discoverer of Mexico and Peru had been driven off gold and silver.

The story is an extraordinary and disturbing one. As one reads it again one notes a score of warnings. It seems, for example, that nations, like individuals, may be stamped by emotional fixations: thus the long fight against the Moors seems to have implanted the habit of belief, which was never sufficiently at rest to change into reflection, thought or inquiry. Continuous war led the mind to turn to the dramatic, not to the philosophical, to the immediately useful or tactical, and not to the theoretical. Ramon y Cajal, the distinguished Spanish scientist, attributed the paucity of science in Spain chiefly to the failure to produce scientific theory. The scientific mind, such as it was, turned to the purely useful. His second reason was that political instability prevented the formation of those anonymous groups of scientific workers who must lie behind the great figures and great discoveries. Everywhere, after the huge and glorious effort of Spain in the 16th century, there is a failure of what might be called the creative social instinct in the individual. He was obliged to fall back upon his static local group; and in the great crises of Spanish history—the Napoleonic invasion or the recent civil war are examples—the local group was reactionary. Professor Trend points out that the popular national rising against Napoleon was a rising against the French Revolution. When we say that the Spaniards are enormous individuals, that their social failure has been compensated by a huge access of private stature, I think we are mistaken. They have an archaic individuality which is sufficient to their particular town or village, but which dwindles when they are taken out of it into the modern world. The formlessness of so much Spanish writing, its dramatic brilliance, but hollowness of thought, illustrates the incompleteness of the Spanish individual whose social instinct has atrophied. The Spaniard *is* something, but he becomes nothing.

It is one of the great tragedies that the movement initiated by Giner and carried on in diverse ways by others since the end of the last century was blown to pieces. One of the most exasperating things in Spanish life was to hear clever Spanish obstructionists denouncing this movement as un-Spanish, infected with dying European liberalism, and so on. It was the one movement which understood the Spanish past and re-created respect for Spain's peculiar and enormous achievements. It was opposed by that revived modern bugbear, one we are now fighting in Europe: the neo-passionate and pseudo-dynamic conception of life, culture and politics. These people had been patiently awakening in the young a sense of the real past and a curiosity about what they could become; and I am always glad when I see Professor Trend telling the foreign reader what so many Spaniards wittily ridiculed or ignored. After the Civil War Europe, and especially England and America, gained what Spain rejected.

V. S. PRITCHETT.

THE LIBERATOR

William the Silent. By C. V. WEDGWOOD. *Cape.* 18*s.*

The Revolt of the Netherlands presents the first example in modern history of the national insurrection of a small people against an oppressive alien domination. The spectacle has become frequent enough in the succeeding centuries, and it is only too familiar to-day. But the story of this first uprising has a peculiar interest, a fascination of its own: the odds against the rebels have never been greater, nor the consequences of their success more important. For this alone made possible the Dutch seventeenth century, with all it has meant to the world since, in painting, in commerce and banking and industry, in colonisation, on the sea. If the Northern Provinces had not achieved their liberation from the distant, deadening control of Spain, their future would have been a poor and insignificant affair.

That the Revolt came about as it did, and that it was finally successful, must partly be attributed to the Spaniards themselves. Philip II never understood the Netherlands, the north least of all; he believed that a policy of exemplary, savage repression was all that was necessary to keep them under. Similarly, his instrument, Alva, spoke of the Dutch as "a pacific people with no courage." It was a fatal mistake, producing not submission but implacable rebellion.

The Revolt found its first leader in William the Silent, Prince of Orange, who stands over against Philip in one of the natural contrasts of history. For where Philip was harsh, morose, a man to whom persecution was congenial and natural, William was gentle, persuasive, a reconciler among politicians, "Father William" to his people. ("The Silent" is an inappropriate nickname, due to the mistranslation of an epithet his enemy Granvelle applied to him, "schluew," meaning "sly.") It is impossible to understand the Revolt without a proper appreciation of his personality. The biographical treatment of history is often wrongly depreciated: here is a case where it is of the utmost value. For nothing but William's inexhaustible patience and political skill kept the uneasy coalition of the rebels together; without him, their union must have broken down at an early stage, and they would easily have been crushed by the Spaniards one by one. He was the original architect of the Revolt, and it owed its initial success primarily to him.

Miss Wedgwood's story is therefore of the greatest political as well as historical interest, and her telling of it is masterly. As readers of her fine book on the Thirty Years' War will remember, she has an unusual power of clear narrative, the faculty of making a highly intricate story plain. She shows it again here, in her skilful handling of the complex politics of sixteenth-century Europe. Her main attention is necessarily concentrated on the figure of William himself, but she has not allowed this to involve any distortion. The book is, in fact, good history as well as good biography.

Nor are the other characters in the story neglected—William's associates, his enemies and rivals. Miss Wedgwood has taken the greatest care to make them all distinct. The Regent Margaret of Parma, for instance:

> She was very Flemish to look at, solidly built with a large-featured, sensible face and a competent mannish stride. A woman of frugal, respectable habits, she was liked by the people, while she commanded some respect from the nobility by her magnificent horsemanship, and evoked their sense of chivalry by an essential womanliness—she stitched at her embroidery frame through council meetings—not altogether belied by her unappealing features and considerable moustache. Yet intelligence and good nature were her best attributes; she lacked, unhappily, what she was most to need, character and dignity.

And there are similarly finished portraits of Philip's minister Granvelle, of the Netherlands nobles Egmont and Horn and Aerschot, of the absurd Archduke Matthias and the fantastic Duke of Anjou.

Miss Wedgwood presents William himself with the greatest sympathy and understanding—yet certainly not with more than he deserves, for he is among the noblest figures in history. He had one great quality in a supreme degree: a tenacity, a political heroism in adversity that have seldom been surpassed. It must inevitably remind an English reader of his great-grandson, our own William III, or of the younger Pitt. But with this there went something equally rare—a profoundly reasonable spirit, to which all religious intolerance was hateful: "I cannot approve of princes attempting to rule the consciences of their subjects," he once remarked. Though he was certainly not a sceptic himself, his attitude to religion was essentially political: in that he was born at least a hundred years before his time, and he seems strangely out of place in the sixteenth century.

But besides his political qualities, William has an extraordinary humanity that can still speak clearly to us as it did to his people. It comes out in his letters and in the scraps of his sayings that ave been preserved—in the piercing cry he ttered at the end, when he was shot by Gérard: "Mon Dieu, ayez pitié de mon âme; mon Dieu, yez pitié de ce pauvre peuple." It is completely haracteristic of him that even in that moment he hould have thought as much of his people as of imself, for he loved them with a real affection, nd without cant it is true to say that he gave imself up to them and to their future. Miss Wedgwood summarises it all admirably in her onclusion:

> He belonged in spirit to an earlier, a more generous and more cultured age than this of narrowness and authority, and thin, sectarian hatred. But he belonged also to a later age; his deep and genuine interest in the people he ruled, his faith in their development, his toleration, his convinced belief in government by consent—all these reach out from the mediæval world towards a wider time. Few statesmen in any period, none in his own, cared so deeply for the ordinary comfort and the trivial happiness of the thousands of individuals who are "the people."

JACK SIMMONS

VERSUS THE GESTAPO

Paris Underground. By ETTA SHIBER. *Harrap.* 10s. *6d.*

After Dunkirk a hundred and fifty British soldiers and airmen were helped to escape from France by two English-speaking ladies living in Paris. One of them, an American now repatriated, has written the story of their exploits. It sounds frankly incredible. The exit route provided by this first of the "underground" movements involved a Paris hotel-keeper, a country priest, a *gueule cassée* wanted by the Gestapo, a peasant owning a farm on the border of the unoccupied zone, and of course the flat in Rue Balny d'Avricourt, with its two ladies, Mme. Beaurepos and Mrs. Shiber, three Pekinese, and perhaps four fugitives waiting in the bathroom for the signal to take the journey south. After a while—so quickly did this rescue service establish itself—the priest would arrange for an escaping Frenchman to accompany each Englishman, in case of trouble on the way; everything, from food (snapped up in the black market) to visas, was organised with the smoothness of a Cook's tour. The courage, dash and efficiency required of everyone sharing in these adventures were taken for granted (how else could they make a move ?); and to inspiration good luck was added. Their game worked for five months before the Gestapo, efficient but rigid, intervened. Mrs. Shiber was picked up, questioned, imprisoned, released, shadowed, re-arrested, confronted with confessions, imprisoned again indefinitely, while one by one the others fell into the traps set for them. The last to be captured was Mme. Beaurepos. Trial by a military court. The death sentence for Mme. Beaurepos and the priest; various terms of imprisonment for the others.

The second half of the book is a description of life in the Cherche-Midi, Fresnes and Troyes prisons; and any doubts the reader might have had of the strict truth of the adventures leading up to prison are dispelled by these pages. The conditions were appalling (though not, perhaps, by Nazi standards): semi-starvation, lack of air, no heat, frozen drinking water, and the hospital worse than the prison. Mrs. Shiber, huddled with four others under a thin blanket, made some strange acquaintances. One was an Alsatian woman, employed by the Gestapo to gain confessions; when accused of this she pleaded that her mother was in a concentration camp, and that only by serving the Germans in this way could she hope to save the old lady from torture and death. Another was serving a year's sentence for uttering the words *sale Boche*, and pinned to her underclothes she carried a brooch bearing the allied flags. Another had forged a ration ticket to get food for her six children. The nature of these crimes and their punishment was caustically summed up by the strangest of all these gaol acquaintances, Louise, an old offender from a pre-war underworld:

> She shook her head wonderingly. "These are funny times," she said. "You don't meet the same kind of people any more. You politicals aren't so much fun, if you don't mind my saying so. Sort of stuffy. . . . Now take the Black Maria that brought me here from Rouen. Six of us there were in it. And, would you believe it, I was the only legitimate one? Mine was the usual—I'd cleaned out an apartment. But the others? No business to be there at all. Babes in the wood, all of them. . . . One of them had drawn capital V's on the walls of houses; another one had shouted, "Vive de Gaulle!" Then there was a woman who had some English leaflets dropped from aeroplanes in her house, and another who was arrested for listening to the London broadcasts. The most desperate criminal in the lot was a woman who had refused to serve a German soldier in a grocery store! What's the country coming to when people like that can call themselves criminals?"

Louise makes a good foil to the other French men and women encountered in this book, nearly all of whom are persecuted, stoical, helpless, or heroic. A certain fluency in seizing such points and making the most of them causes one at times to wonder whether in small incidents and situations Mrs. Shiber isn't deviating into fiction. This suspicion, let me add, is only momentary: detail after detail rams home the factual truth of Mrs. Shiber's narrative; the conditions described are inherently fantastic, and the author's memory has a knack in dealing with them. Apart from other evidence, the portraits of the five people brought to trial, and especially of the author and of her friend Mme. Beaurepos, are finally convincing. Mme. Beaurepos is compared (and the name comes up naturally in the circumstances) with Nurse Cavell. What happened to her is, apparently, still not known. The last news was that she had been removed to a prison camp in Germany. Mrs. Shiber herself was exchanged for a well-known Nazi spy held in America. On her return home—in May, 1942—she found again many of the things she had been longing for, together with a "frightening indifference." "Are we really at war?" she kept asking herself; and her memory went back to the sufferings and heroisms of France. Her book conveys, as well as its adventures, a genuine love of the people who have resisted tyranny and are at this moment awaiting liberation.

G. W. STONIER

CHILDHOOD OF AN AMBASSADOR

Before the Storm. By I. M. MAISKY. *Hutchinson.* 15*s.*

Some day, perhaps, the able and charming man who through more than a dozen uneasy years was the Soviet Ambassador at the Court of St. James's, will be free to tell the personal story of his work in London. But for the present, we must be grateful that M. Maisky used the long dark evenings of an English winter to write his recollections of a childhood and youth spent on the fringe of Siberia. For here already, in the child, we can see developing the sensitive and honest personality from whom his friends parted with such regret last year. And here too, is the discovery that the diplomat is also a man of no mean literary ability, possessing the power to single out the formative influences and events that led him, step by step, into the struggle against Tsarism and eventually into the higher ranks of the Bolshevik Party.

Omsk, where M. Maisky lived with his family, was, in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, a sprawling, dirty, and semi-civilised town. Muscovites would say of it: "if you ride for three years you'll never get to Omsk." A few officers, government officials, the school-teachers

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and one or two local merchants made up the town's society. But M. Maisky's family had little to do with them. Both his parents were serious, intelligent people; his mother devoted her life to her children; his father gave his to scientific research, a difficult and unusual pursuit for lower medical officers in the old Russian Army. M. Maisky's home, therefore, was very advanced by the standards of Russia in the 'eighties. Of it he says:

> My father . . . always remained a sincere democrat, an opponent of Tsarism, and a free-thinking scientific rationalist. He did not recognise religion, and there were never any ikons, lamps or consecrated bread in our home. All our family were brought up in an atmosphere of atheism.

And it was from his father's single-minded devotion to his scientific work that his son learnt what it was for a man's life to be given

> not to his own profit or family nor to his own individual welfare, but to a great and splendid idea.

But young Maisky was not to find his own ideal easily. He had an early scientific bent, and both his parents did what they could to encourage his interest in his father's work. M. Maisky helped him in his laboratory experiments; he read book after book on the origins and nature of the universe, on travel, on biology. He took up amateur astronomy and corresponded with one of the savants of St. Petersburg about it. And when the urge passed its influence remained. The growing boy whose interests now began to turn to literature and philosophy had trained his mind and developed a creative but controlled imagination.

> If it had been my fate to live in some peaceful and orderly age, it is highly probable that all my work would have passed between the scientist's study and the lecture-room of a university. . . . However, I was born in an exceptionally stormy, dynamic age—an age of great historical change, of the twilight of Capitalism and the rise of Socialism . . . the heated atmosphere of a revolutionary age easily turns potential scientists into militant bearers of the new social idea. . . . That is what happened to me.

Even in Omsk, the shadow of the coming storm could be seen. With his father, who during the summer went as medical officer on the barges carrying prisoners to Siberia, M. Maisky travelled thousands of miles. He met the "politicals" and talked to them; he came to know intimately the sailors and peasants whom he met on the journey, and to understand something of the misery of their existence. As yet, the disquiet and disillusion that his experiences awakened had not formed themselves into a clear picture of the evils and weaknesses of his society. Contact with older friends who had slight connections with the revolutionary movement, summer holidays spent near Moscow with an uncle who became one of the most brilliant radical cartoonists; endless discussions with his schoolmates about the irrational and inhuman world in which they seemed to live; these were the means to intellectual maturity and a revolutionary outlook.

But it was above all in the contrast between the perspectives opened up by his wide literary and philosophical reading and the reality of life in the cramped, narrow society of a provincial town, that M. Maisky found the stimulus to rebellion. At first, it was against the futility of the schoolmasters and curriculum. Later, with a few friends, it began to express itself in a nihilistic discontent. He wrote poems and fantasies—which, to judge from the examples quoted in the text, displayed considerable talent—but which

> brought out only too clearly the incompleteness of our whole idea and the emptiness of the moods which filled us with so much enthusiasm. It was all very fine: we would stir up millions of the downtrodden and oppressed, we would pass over the world like a terrible storm and destroy the old loathsome life to its foundations, and what then? This fundamental question had no answer. . . .

It was to be some years before M. Maisky found that answer. The final piece would fit into the puzzle only on the eve of his departure as a student to St. Petersburg. Wandering around the bookstalls in Moscow where he had broken his journey, he picked up a translation of the Webbs' *History of British Trade Unionism*. That night he sat up until he had finished the book. For the first time he glimpsed the pattern of an organised and coherent movement. The revolutionary unrest in Russia no longer seemed to be a question of isolated strikes here, of rumours of agrarian disturbances there; now these had a meaning and an internal consistency. Two days later, sitting in the St. Petersburg train, watching the pleasant countryside roll past,

> it seemed that all the thoughts, feelings, seekings, hopes and expectations which during so many years had perturbed and worried me, had all arranged themselves in order in my head . . . and formulated the all-answering conclusion: "I must join the workers' movement".

Before the Storm is a fascinating book. For with a rare candour and clarity, M. Maisky has not only told the story of his own early life: the skill with which he has set it against the background of the old Russia makes it an essay in social analysis as well as an excellent autobiography.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

NEW PAMPHLETS

First Annual Report. COLONIAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE. *H. M. Stationery Office* 2s.

An account of the work of the Research Committee of the Colonial Office. Gives a summary of the schemes approved for grants under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940. Amongst the most important of these schemes is one establishing Research Fellowships open to candidates from any part of the Empire which will help form a cadre of scientists trained to deal with colonial problems. Other projects include a hydrographic survey of Kenya and a geological survey in Nigeria.

South-East Asia. The Far East. *Royal Institute of International Affairs. 6d. each.*

Two booklets in the series published for the information of discussion group leaders, especially those in the Forces. Both provide a sound factual survey of the areas concerned.

The Price of Full Employment. By SEEBOHM ROWNTREE. *Liberal Publications Dept.* 3d.

A further contribution to the discussion of the means to full employment, written by a sociologist with first-hand experience of the social consequences of industrial depression and instability.

Idealism Against Religion. By JOHN MACMURRAY. *Lindsey Press.* 1s.

Reprint of a lecture by Professor MacMurray in which he discusses the relation and the antagonism of idealism and religious belief.

The Land and the Nation. By C. S. ORWIN. *Society of Friends.* 3d.

A talk given by Dr. Orwin in 1942 on the necessity and a possible method of nationalising the land.

Remember the Warsaw Ghetto. *Federation of Polish Jews in Great Britain.*

The story of the Nazi reduction of Jewish resistance in Warsaw in 1943.

SHORTER NOTICE

Nutrition and National Health. By SIR ROBERT MCCARRISON. *Faber and Faber.* 6s.

The subject matter of this book is made up of three Cantor lectures delivered eight years ago before the Royal Society of Arts by the author, who was formerly Director of Research on Nutrition in India. It

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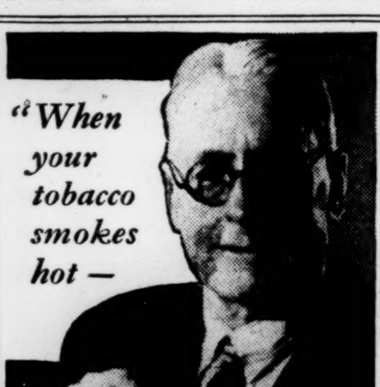

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Company Meeting

SMITH'S POTATO CRISPS

SIR HERBERT MORGAN'S SPEECH

THE fifteenth ordinary general meeting of Smith's Potato Crisps (1929), Ltd., was held on 14 June in London, Sir Herbert E. Morgan, K.B.E. (the chairman), presiding.

The chairman, in the course of his speech, said: The net profit for the year, after provision for taxation, amounts to £84,148, as against £83,761 last year. We propose to pay a final dividend of 20 per cent. with a cash bonus of 5 per cent., both subject to income tax (making 32½ per cent. for the year). The results prove that in spite of our special problems and difficulties, there is no lessening in the efficiency with which the business is conducted, the strength of your company, or the popularity of Smith's Potato Crisps.

While such a large proportion of our output of Smith's Potato Crisps are on national service—that is, being provided for His Majesty's Forces as well as thousands of canteens, both civil and military—we have still done our best to supply the general public. If I might quote the old phrase, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," this could be certainly said of our Crisps. Never in the history of the company has there been greater eagerness to obtain supplies, and we have been overwhelmed with gratifying testimony from every class of the community on the value to the household of the uses of Smith's Crisps.

During these days of limited staffs, curtailment of heating facilities for cooking, and pressure on the time of the housewife, our commodity has increased its hold on the people. For more than a generation now our Crisps have been the stand-by of innumerable families, and in recent years of rationing, because our 2d. packets provide a perfectly prepared and nourishing meal, they have become more than ever a necessity.

You are all aware of the almost innumerable plans for the reconstruction of practically everything and everybody that are finding expression to-day. I hope that in these plans certain reforms in our licensing laws will be effected enabling licensed houses—who have always been such a valued source of distribution to us—to render even greater service to the public.

Before the war, through the enterprise of our brewers in all parts of the country, the houses built for public entertainment and refreshment led in architectural design and quality of craftsmanship, as well as in amenities for the public. In the long period of housing shortage which is generally envisaged, the provision of food and drink in these comfortable surroundings will have added value.

I am pleased to be able to report the profitable progress of our agricultural estates, consisting of nearly 9,000 acres in the Eastern Counties. They form a very solid and substantial background to our business. The total value of our crops is approximately £200,000 a year. This Estate Co. is justified in looking forward to a period of prosperity.

With regard to the future, all we ask for to ensure continued prosperity is to be relieved of restrictions and be enabled to employ all workers necessary to fulfil demands made on us.

The report was adopted.

efore is not a new book, and in many ways it s. The facts enumerated are, of course, of value; they are apparently correct. Sir Robert quotes h approval some conclusions with which we must agree from the Report of the United Nations nference on Food and Agriculture, held at Hot rings last year. Malnutrition, undoubtedly, is ponsible for widespread impairment of human ciency and for an enormous amount of ill-health disease. There can be no doubt that unless a ernment has a sound food and nutrition policy, it be impossible, in that country, to eliminate cific deficiency diseases and achieve national good lth. Given the will, we have the power to build every nation a people more fit, more vigorous, more npetent: a people with longer, more productive s, and with more physical and mental stamina, n the world has ever known. The author asks oft-repeated questions: "What evidence is there physical inefficiency in this country?" and "What dence is there that this physical inefficiency is ted to faulty nutrition?" For his evidence he s to the Report of the Adjutant-General for 1934. is latter found that over half the men that went to recruiting office did not come up to the not very h physical standard laid down. "In the big lustrial areas of the North the percentage of rejecns rose to 68." The facts made public by the neer Health Centre at Peckham were even more concerting. Sir Robert McCarrison devotes one tion of his book to the relation of certain food entials to the structure and function of the dy. This is perhaps the most valuable part of the rk. To sum up: this is not a book for the casual der. On the other hand, it is one that presents tain important facts in a new light and with new er-connections. Nutrition specialists will find it nost indispensable; as also will statesmen who responsible for introducing social legislation.

* * *

We regret that in the Shorter Notice of the inistry of Information booklet *The Royal Marines*, blished in our issue of June 10th, Commander dgar P. Young was wrongly given as the author.

Week-end Competitions

No. 750

t by **Roger Marvell**

It is rumoured that in a Rome otherwise mercilly almost intact the beautiful Protestant cemetery, containing the graves of Keats and Shelley, was damaged. The usual prizes are offered for a sonnet inspired by this story. Entries should be received not later than June 26th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 746

Set by W. R.

Mr. Arthur Marshall's Nurse Dugdale is making a deserved hit on the wireless each Friday evening. Competitors are invited to submit comments in her not inimitable style upon pre-fabricated houses, co-educational schools, the Royal Academy or *Hamlet*. Four guineas are offered for the best entries of not more than 250 words.

Report by W. R.

The style invented by Mr. Marshall is not available for study except in the form of gramophone records, which was bound to make this a very difficult competition. This style blends sardonically the *clichés* of the novelette with the *argot*, at once hearty and dowdy, of the school-story for girls. (Some readers may remember the erudite reviews of such school-stories that Mr. Marshall before his leap into fame used to contribute for these columns.) To judge the scripts one must hear them with the mind's ear delivered in a fruity contralto. D. W. Barker's entry was good, but too remote from the subject. Erik Hutchinson, Constance Sewell and Penelope Gibson are highly commended, and I recommend a first prize of two guineas to R. J. P. Hewison and a second prize of one guinea to Ellen Evans.

NURSE DUGDALE ON HAMLET

Out of my way, deah, out of my way—*instantly!*—Programme?—No thanks: we know our Gilbart and Sollivan inside out. What? *Shakespeah?* Parky, old fruit, you've let the side down. Smooth your apronn and make a clean bosom.

* * *

What are they doing, deah? That's his father's ghost, telling him what that boundah his uncle . . . Who murdered who? . . . How could he murder a ghost? . . . What a hob-a-bob those people behind are making! Shsh yourselves.

* * *

Of course he's mental, deah: this is Shakespeah. No, Parky, minding old Mrs. Cutbush in the Impossibles isn't half so narve-wearing . . . Not the clean potato, Polonius, but Hamlet needn't have batted him such a beezah on the midriff.

Now *she's* mad. Yes, deah, very like Miss Smith who fell out of the Mentals. No use going to a nonnery, but it would have done her a warld of good to come to the Hydro as a probationah. My ward! I'd knock some stoffing into her!

* * *

No, Matronn deah, *not* an air-raid sheltah—a grave. Morbid? No—the way they're playing with that skoll reminds me of the first yeah at St. Maggoty's having a good old revel in the Demonstration.

* * *

Fencing—pity they couldn't hack it out with hockey-sticks. Oh, well played! George! a fizzing wheeze! The Dane impounds the visitor's weaponn. No good—both dead. Remembah that, Parky, when you skimp your sterilizing in the Sargical. The Queen's dead . . . and the King . . . A.1 show and top-notch. Cheery-pip. R. J. P. HEWISON

CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS

"Hullo, hullo, hullo, Mr. Neill, dear! How are we to-day? A pain in the abdomen? Aha! If Matron hears of that, she will insist, yes definitely insist, on giving you one of her Patent Charcoal Chrunchies. Now Mr. Neill, dear! A teeny-weeny smile for Nursey. No? Come, come, Mr. Neill! You're worrying about those dear boys and girls in that topping old school of yours. Cheer up, dear! As Mr. Foozle, the Probation Officer, remarked to Matron at the last Police Gymkhana:

"When things go awry and lads break the law
We must just put our trust in Esprit de Corps."

Don't worry, dear! Parky's second cousin went to Huddles, that positively top-hole co-educational school, and now he sells chicken-food and is engaged to a missionary's daughter! So never lose hope! Aha, Mr. Neill! What have we here? "THE MYSTERY AT MUMPING MANOR." This will buck you up.

CHAPTER ONE.

Michael and Monica sat side by side in the Stinks Lab. Michael furtively took out his water-pistol and filled it to its utmost capacity with sulphuric acid. "Oh, Michael," giggled Monica admiringly, "You have the most scrumptious ideas!" "Shut up," hissed Michael, "Cave!" When Mr. Wigglepatch, affectionately known as Salt Peter, entered, the two were seemingly immersed in a quadratic equation . . .

What's that, Parky? Matron has Tic Douloureux? O.K., dear! I'll be there! Now remember, Mr. Neill! Boys will be boys and girls will be girls! So cheer up and Cheerio!" ELLEN EVANS

Personal

DAM Hill School and Children's Farm reqs. holiday helpers July–Sept.; care children 12 yrs. in and out doors. Strenuous, but int. . Parents w. children welc. Falkner, B.A., Molton, N. Devon.

HARVEST. Wanted during Aug.-Sept., strong, energetic men to help with harvest Cotswold farm; also girl or man, June till pt., all jobs. Mrs. Kennard, Chapel Ash, uiting Power, nr. Cheltenham, Glos.

NVADE the Fields—Bring in the Victory Harvest at Youth Camps, Surrey, Huntingn. Enjoy hols. in atmos. internat. friendship. m. July 1 (not under 17 yrs.). Details: Intertional Youth Council, 30 Pont St., S.W.1.

EW children welcomed share lessons, happy home life in country with boy of 5. Comete charge taken. Own produce. Gissing, rbon, Westmorland, Carnforth.

FFICER'S wife (3 yrs. old daughter) offers accom., etc., in mews cottage (Knightsidge) to mother and child in return for mestic help. Sloane 5111. Box A242.

WANTED purchase small bk.-shop cash/ partnership. Details in confid. Box A182.

NSTITUTO Espanol. Spanish Classes (Elem. and Advanced) by native teachers. kly. lects. in Spanish. 58 Princes Gate, S.W.7.

ESSONS in French and German given by trained teacher. S. Herling, 7 Brondesbury llas, N.W.6.

HONS. B.Sc. Lond. would like to coach students Inter. and Subsid. in physics and emistry. Box A72.

BOXING lessons reqd. Quote fees, facilities. Box A141.

WATCHES wanted, new, old, disused, or out of order. Top prices paid. Send gistered. Cash or offer by return. Kay's N.S.), 19 Hopwood Ave., Manchester, 4.

WANTED. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th; Children's, 10 vols.; Chamber's recent. ighest prices paid. Foyles, 121 Charing Cross d., W.C.2. Gerrard 5660.

STAMPS. Lots of 250 mod. colonials and foreign. Sent on appro., ½*d.* each. heeseman, 16 Addiscombe Rd., Watford.

Personal—continued

HERE To-day: new venture—literary review, regional (Reading, Berkshire); articles on rep., ballet, community; short stories, poems. 1*s.* 4*d.* post free, from Roland Mathias, 184 Wantage Rd., Reading.

JOAD'S "Present Position of Conscientious Objection," reprinted (2*d.*); Monthly Bulletin, 3*s.* p.a.; "Troublesome People" (6*d.*); "C.O. and the Acts" (6*d.*). Post. extra. Central Board for C.O.s, 6 Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

To Let and Wanted

TO let, furn., Fitzroy Sq., 2-rmed. flat, bathrm., kitch. 4 *gns.* Box A33.

INOFFENSIVE woman wants small flat or share in house, Chelsea-Victoria district. No immediate hurry. Box E2864.

WANTED August, furn. rural cottage. Parents, infant, dog. Particulars, alternative suggestions, free and easy hol. Box A137.

WANTED, furn./semi-furn. house of character, 3–4 bedrooms, 30–35 miles London, longish let consid. Box A156.

WANTED. Before Sept. for six months or longer, furn. house, Surrey; 3 or more bedrooms, conven. access London. Lady and grown-up daughter. Five *gns.* p.w. or sim. Box A214.

2ND Lt.'s wife, exp. baby, seeks small unfurn. cott. or share larger w. others similarly penniless. Slattery, 48 Marchmont St., W.C.1.

Accommodation Offered and Wanted

WELL-furnished divan rooms with kitchen and running water, from 55*s.* per wk. 7 Handel St., W.C.1.

WELL-furnished bed-sit.-rm., quiet, beautiful heath surroundings, suitable for professional worker. 35*s.* Breakfast if reqd. Box E2116.

LARGE furn. studio or room avail. top flat, 85 Lancaster Gate. Use kitchen, bath, 'phone, etc. PAD. 4691.

BARNET. Bed-sit.-room avail. House of army officer's family. Walking distance New Barnet (L.N.E.R.), High Barnet (Underground). Meals provided. Suit professional lady working North/Central London. Box A145.

Accommodation—continued

SHARE flat w. profess. lady, large furn. bedsit.-rm., own gas meter, kitchen, bath. Nr. Hampstead Heath. Box A211.

YOUNG woman teacher, socialist, wishes to let part of furn. flat, N.W.11, to pleasant companion. Box A166.

DEVON farmhouse, 2 large bright furnished rooms to let; use of kitchen and bathroom. Indoor sanitation; own linen and silver. Refs. Box A155.

UNFURN. rm. young lady's flat. H. & C., gas, e.l. 16*s.* 6*d.* Mrs. Good, 55 Delaware Mans., W.9.

AMERICAN lady offers bed, breakfast, two young ladies, separate rooms in large comf. flat, use kitch., keeping own rations, 3 *gns.* each. Mrs. Page, 66 Barkston Gdns., S.W.5. Frobisher 4778 (evenings).

FLATLET/bed.-sit. and kitch. wtd., nr. Baker St., by yng. wom. teacher (slender purse). 30*s.* or under. Box A241.

BERNARD SHAW's
famous essay "IMPRISONMENT"
will shortly be re-issued by the
Prison Medical Reform Council,
5, Lower Camden, Chislehurst, Kent.
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